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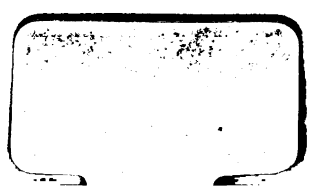
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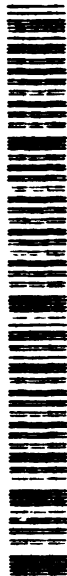
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LIFE AND LETTERS  
OF  
BARTHOLD GEORGE NIEBUHR,  
AND  
SELECTIONS FROM HIS MINOR WRITINGS.



THE  
LIFE AND LETTERS  
OF  
BARTHOLD GEORGE NIEBUHR,  
AND SELECTIONS FROM HIS MINOR WRITINGS.

EDITED AND TRANSLATED  
BY SUSANNA WINKWORTH.

WITH  
ESSAYS ON HIS CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE

BY THE CHEVALIER BUNSEN,  
AND PROFESSORS BRANDIS AND LOEBELL.

SECOND EDITION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. III.

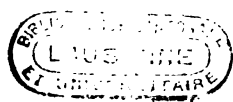
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## CONTENTS.

	Page
CHEVALIER BUNSEN'S LETTER TO THE EDITOR . . . . .	ix
EXTRACTS FROM NIEBUHR'S LETTERS TO CHEVALIER BUNSEN . . . . .	lv

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### EXTRACTS FROM NIEBUHR'S LETTERS FROM HOLLAND IN 1808 AND 1809.

Arrival in Amsterdam . . . . .	3
First impressions of the City . . . . .	4
Dutch Merchants—Mr. Labouchere . . . . .	6
Evening Parties in Amsterdam . . . . .	8
The Marine School—Paintings—The New Church . . . . .	10
Felix Meritis Society . . . . .	15
The Old Church of Amsterdam—M. Saportas—An Antiquary . . . . .	16
Utrecht Cathedral—Old Dutch patricians . . . . .	21
Agricultural Population . . . . .	24
The Artist De Witt . . . . .	25
Dutch Conveyances . . . . .	26
King Louis Buonaparte . . . . .	27
Saardam . . . . .	28
The Country round Amsterdam—Dutch frugality . . . . .	31
Haarlem . . . . .	34
Old Municipal Institutions . . . . .	38
North Holland—The clean Village of Broek . . . . .	39

	Page
The Workhouse—Orphan Houses—Almshouses—Hospital . . . . .	44
Brügmans . . . . .	52
Leyden—Pictures—Siege of Leyden . . . . .	53
Appearance of Leyden . . . . .	56
The Hague . . . . .	58
Delft—Monuments of Van Tromp, Piet Hein, and William I.—Rot- terdam—Religious Services—Dordrecht . . . . .	59
Friesland—Dutch Catholics—English army in Holland . . . . .	64
Court of Holland—Dutch Benevolence—Intolerance . . . . .	68
Violence of Party Spirit . . . . .	71
The King—General Janssen—Financial condition of Holland . . . . .	72
Moravian Missions . . . . .	75
Bigotry of the Dutch . . . . .	76
Exhibition of Modern Paintings—Difference between modern painting and that of the Greeks—Bank of Amsterdam . . . . .	79
National Characteristics of the Dutch . . . . .	83
French Literati—The Romantic School—Legislative Assembly . . . . .	89
Financial condition of Holland—Noble conduct of the King . . . . .	91

## POLITICAL FRAGMENTS.

ON IRELAND . . . . .	97
THE DANGER OF INTRODUCING NEW INSTITUTIONS WITHOUT DUE PRE- PARATION . . . . .	109
THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION . . . . .	111
PITT . . . . .	113
THE HAND OF GOD IN PRUSSIA'S DELIVERANCE FROM NAPOLEON . . . . .	115
EXTRACT FROM A FUNDAMENTAL LAW FOR THE NETHERLANDS . . . . .	117
INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS . . . . .	120
EXTRACT FROM NIEBUHR'S REPLY TO SCHMALZ ON THE TUGENDBUND . . . . .	132
ON THE ESSENCE OF THE STATE . . . . .	134
APOLOGY FOR AN EXPRESSION IN THE PREFACE TO VON VINCKE'S WORK ON THE INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF GREAT BRITAIN . . . . .	137
FRAGMENT ON THE STATE OF SWITZERLAND IN 1823 . . . . .	143

## MISCELLANEOUS SELECTIONS.

	Page
LETTERS TO SAVIGNY.—The Constitution of Italian and German Cities	
during the Middle Ages . . . . .	155
Ancient Weights and Measures . . . . .	163
Constitution of Tivoli in the Middle Ages . . . . .	168
Municipal Institutions in the Middle Ages . . . . .	171
ON THE PERIODS OF GENIUS IN LITERATURE . . . . .	175
ON MARCUS ANTONINUS AND HIS AGE . . . . .	181
ON PETRONIUS AND HIS AGE . . . . .	195
ON XENOPHON'S HELLENICS, AND THE CHARACTER OF XENOPHON AND	
PLATO . . . . .	198
INTRODUCTION TO THE LECTURES ON ROMAN ANTIQUITIES . . . . .	213
ON THE AMPHICTYONIC LEAGUE . . . . .	226
ON THE ARMENIAN TRANSLATION OF EUSEBIUS . . . . .	238
ON THE AGE OF QUINTUS CURTIUS . . . . .	255
SKETCH OF THE GROWTH AND DECAY OF THE ANCIENT AND THE RISE	
OF THE MODERN CITY OF ROME . . . . .	277
PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATION OF DEMOSTHENES . . . . .	296



**NIEBUHR'S POLITICAL OPINIONS AND  
CHARACTER.**

**A Letter**

**ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR BY CHEVALIER BUNSEN.**

**VOL. III.**

*b*



## NIEBUHR'S POLITICAL OPINIONS AND CHARACTER.

A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR BY  
CHEVALIER BUNSEN.

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CARLTON TERRACE, Oct. 31st, 1852.

MY DEAR MISS WINKWORTH,

You have kindly called upon me to write, for the second edition of your "Life and Letters of Niebuhr," a few explanatory words on some points which have lately come under discussion, and in particular on two which are of a very general interest. The one is Niebuhr's view of modern constitutional government, about which there exists a marked difference of opinion, both in England and Germany : the other, his going out of office in 1810, which latter has been made the object of an unwarranted attack in his own country.

To respond to any such call, coming from you, is a great gratification to me, were it only because it affords me an opportunity of expressing to you, my admiration of the talent and zeal which you have shown in preparing yourself for so arduous a task, and in accomplishing it so successfully. Nor can I deny that I am, in a certain manner, particularly called upon to commu-



nicate to your readers, what I may have to say, on points, on which my great master has been misunderstood and attacked, in consequence of your publication.

Let me premise, however, that the discussion of the political opinions and life of Niebuhr is still beset with great difficulties.

The time is not yet come, when the public men of Germany, of the forty years which precede 1848, can be historically dealt with, and when the political conduct of the heroes of that period can be understood and fairly judged. Still, in the meantime, misrepresentations and calumnies are put forth, in that discreditable part of the literature of the day which is fed by lying memoirs or by simple ignorance, and carried on by hireling pens and party-men. Under such circumstances, it is certainly the duty of honest patriots to refute unjust attacks upon the great and good men of that age ; but it must not be forgotten, that they cannot bring to bear on the question all the facts that they may know.

As to the English public, every friend and admirer of Niebuhr cannot but be thankful for the impression which your "Life and Letters" have produced in this country. With the exception of a few persons, Niebuhr was hitherto known in England only as the historian of Rome, and the greatest critical author, and most learned man, of the age. But, let me add, as such, he was more generally studied than even in Germany. In that country, beyond the professional men of erudition, a much smaller number reads learned historical works than in England ; and a never-resting machinery is at work, exciting an immense number of incompetent writers and young men

to make themselves a reputation, by doubting whatever has been said before them. Niebuhr's immortal merits in the restoration of Roman history, whether by his, alas ! incomplete great work, or by his more popular "Lectures," are at this moment incontestably more appreciated, and his works more generally read, in England than in Germany. Nowhere is this fact more apparent than at your Universities. Of the seven thousand copies or more, which have been sold in this country, of the "Roman History" alone, either in the excellent translation or in the original, full three-fourths have gone to the two great Universities ; and have been made the standing object of a careful and reproductive analysis, in those institutions, in which, according to the vulgar opinion, the young men of England only carry on the school themes of their boyhood.

Now that Niebuhr himself,—the affectionate husband,—the tender father,—the faithful friend,—the man of uncompromising integrity and antique truthfulness of mind,—is before the English public, the sublime virtue of the man has endeared him to this nation, fully as much as the unparalleled erudition and sagacity of the scholar, and the wonderful talents of the historian. This general impression has had, on the whole, a faithful, although an incomplete and hasty echo in the public Reviews. I think it unnecessary to dwell at any length on some scarcely serious whimsical reflections and charges, or to refute blunders arising out of sheer ignorance ; for instance, whether Niebuhr was not a Dane, and left his fatherland for a foreign country ! Nor will you expect

me seriously to discuss the point submitted by one of your reviewers,\* how Niebuhr could say, "that it is only a little State which can have 'as such' a National Debt," whereas Niebuhr said no such thing, but only asserted in that marvellously misunderstood passage,† that a city, being a member of a State (as, for instance, Berlin or Magdeburg in Prussia), could not have such a National Debt as that under which the free German Republic of Hamburg was groaning, in consequence of the bloody rapacity of Napoleon and his Marshal, Davoust. This blunder is as evident as the value of the wise conclusions drawn from it by the reviewer:—that Niebuhr "meant to say, that if the creditors of the State are citizens, and not foreigners, the debt was no evil." Or, shall I refute such attacks as the following, made by the same author upon Niebuhr the historian? The reviewer says,‡ "Niebuhr totally mistook the duties of an historian. He supposed it was his place to dogmatise, *and make no attempts* to convince the *understanding of his readers*; and if any one made objections, reply that he is an ignorant blockhead, and evidently incompetent to judge." Now, it is a fact that Niebuhr, in his second edition, has treated all objections made against his first, by really learned men,

\* "Eclectic Review" for June, 1852. p. 656.

+ "Life and Letters," vol. i., p. 401, (in the first edition, p. 395): "You [in Hamburg] have enjoyed the advantages of independence: the helplessness of a city which stands alone as a State, is inseparable from them. In a great State, all may unite to raise up a single ruined city. It has, as such, no National Debt. For a single city to have a large National Debt, is to have a monster devouring its vitals."

‡ "Eclectic Review," p. 665.

with the greatest deference and modesty, even where he could not adopt their suggestions; as to other attacks, he took his revenge simply by passing them over in silence. And surely what he deliberately said in his book, not what he may have said in most confidential letters, written on the spur of the moment, and fresh from the impression of what he considered as incompetent criticism, ought to be made the test of his judgment as an author respecting the opposition he met with. But our reviewer has, with assiduous care, ransacked all the passages contained in five letters, written from 1816 to 1827.\* And what do they amount to? Four of these passages (which, moreover, ought to be read by the candid judge in their context) contain nothing but the expression, that his deep and patient researches had given him a strong conviction of the truths he had discovered, and the principles he had established. It is true, that in a fifth letter (August 4th, 1830,) he gives vent to his vexation at a flippant review of his "Roman History" in the "*Journal des Débats*," and speaks lightly of the scholarship and historical knowledge of the author—M. Villemain. The personal friends of that amiable and unfortunate statesman and writer, would scarcely be very indignant at Niebuhr's calling him, in this respect, in 1830, "a man whose weak head had been turned by the plaudits of the public." But what is it that makes Niebuhr indignant? No serious objection to any single assertion of the reviewer, but the ignorant and foolish remark, "that it is nothing new to refuse to regard the

\* Dec. 7th, 1816; May 23rd, 1822; April 29th, 1827; July 18th, 1827.

earliest times as historical." As if Niebuhr had ever put forward such a trite observation, which, strictly understood, is a truism!—as if the object achieved by the German critic was nothing but a pedantic and pretentious reproduction of the doubts of that ingenious Frenchman, Beaufort,—as if the problem of criticism which is now before the age, and the paramount glory of Niebuhr in treating it, were not something utterly different; namely, to reconstruct the true history, in spite of, nay, through the instrumentality of myths and fictions, and wilful falsifications of the past! Do you think that history, should that French article ever reach posterity, will give a milder verdict than Niebuhr pronounced on reading the journal which had just reached him, upon that piece of French impertinence?—"These people are actually unable to understand, that the value of my exposition consists in my having shown why, and how each circumstance has been invented." And these are the very words, marked in italics by the English reviewer, in support of a charge so unworthy of an English critic.

Do not, therefore, expect me, my dear Miss Winkworth, to enter into a defence of Niebuhr, the historian, against such intemperate charges. Does it not strike you besides, that it is still more ridiculous than unjust to speak of "*Niebuhr's Roman History*" as if it were his only historical production, and as if it were complete, instead of stopping exactly where the critic was beginning to merge into the historian? And yet what living spirits has Niebuhr called forth from that field of dead and dry bones,—the first four

centuries of the Roman history ! Where we had mere names of men and pale shadows of events, where the historians yet extant had already—either through ignorance and neglect, or tainted by party-spirit—confused the old traditions, there we now see before us living characters, glowing with reality, and beaming with truth. It is, therefore, unpardonable, for a serious writer and a sagacious man (for such I take the reviewer to be), to speak of Niebuhr's "Roman History," as if its fame and value stood and fell with some of his conjectures respecting the obscure and doubtful origin of ancient tribes and languages,—conjectures, on which Niebuhr dwells less than any one who has written after him, from Ottfried Müller to Gerlach and Francis Newman. Are, then, his Lectures on the whole Roman history from Romulus to Romulus Augustulus, and those on the history of the whole remaining ancient world, to be counted for nothing ? Are these six volumes nothing because they are unique and almost marvellous ?—because we have them only from his lips, poured forth with that unfathomable knowledge and prodigious memory, to which every important detail was always present, as if he had studied it but that very moment ? Only a very few notes having been found among Niebuhr's papers, they have been, as you know, correctly and artistically reproduced on the faith of the MSS. of the most diligent and intelligent of his hearers,—a most meritorious work, which we owe principally to the pious care of the distinguished son of the historian, and to the translator who has so wonderfully succeeded in rendering

them into English. Now, here we have the test of Niebuhr's scrupulous accuracy as a scholar, which is unparalleled in the annals of literature. In a production equal in volumes to "Gibbon's History," and embracing the whole ancient world, where do we find inaccuracies, even in his minute quotations? No, my dear Miss Winkworth; the author of that Review is an Englishman, and besides, undoubtedly a learned man and a lover of truth, and I cannot help thinking that, in recalling these circumstances, he must feel something like shame at having written the following sentence, to transcribe which shall be the only punishment for his unwarrantable attacks :—

"Niebuhr's quotations are often real garblings, highly deceptive. This had, at one time, shaken our confidence in his integrity. But we have no doubt that it arose out of his abominable practice of trusting his immense memory, instead of referring to the book. The consequence is, that his memory retained only so much as countenanced his theory, and forgot the clauses which positively refuted it. In such ways the confident hare is outstripped in the race by the tortoise. No student should ever trust a quotation made by Niebuhr."\*

As to direct falsehoods, spitefully or gratuitously brought forward against the character of such a great and good man, and even as to groundless stories lightly repeated, I beg to refer to what Niebuhr says, in the beginning of the third volume of his "History," when speaking of the ever-renewed calumnies against great men :—"Such falsehoods must be unflinchingly attacked

\* "Eclectic Review," p. 666., note.

and exposed wherever they are found ; because it is impossible to extirpate their germs, which are rooted in the lowest part of human nature,—the desire to depreciate.” But, I repeat it, the most influential English Reviews have not only treated Niebuhr with respect and veneration, but have delighted in doing justice, no less to the character, than to the genius of so eminent and good a man. And we are sure this national judgment will be confirmed by the generations to come ; every succeeding year, every deeper investigation into the political and literary character of the man and his age, will tend to strengthen that impression.

We live in a critical epoch of the world, when no mortal can yet tell whether Europe is advancing to life, or sinking to death ; whether the elements of decay, or those of new life, are the real signs of the times. But certainly one prevailing character of our age is an incessant bustle. A thousand puny reputations of the day dispute each other the rank in the great race for the honour, or at least for the gain, of the moment : and the brilliant mediocrity of talent, and the undoubting shallowness of conceit would feel themselves little honoured by being even compared with one or two men of genius or deep thought, destined to survive all those ephemeral celebrities of the different municipalities of the European literary and political republic. All these bubbles, however, burst and sink into nothing as soon as a generation or two have passed over them, while those few grow like the shadow of the evening sun ; and none are more certain to do so than those who combine, as Niebuhr so eminently did, powers of mind



with sanctity of life, great knowledge with simplicity of character and singleness of purpose.

But it is not the object of this epistle to appeal to posterity on his behalf. I address myself without hesitation to the sound judgment of my cotemporaries, both in England and Germany, in treating the two points, mentioned at the opening of this letter, which you particularly wished to see cleared up.

First, then, you ask, What was Niebuhr's opinion respecting the political creed of the age? What, in other words, did he think of the constitutional system? Many of our liberal writers have blamed him for illiberal views, and our Eclectic reviewer, with singular taste, calls him an abettor of tyranny; because, forsooth, when Prussian Minister at Rome, he anticipated the instructions of his Government to assist the Austrian commissariat in a momentary embarrassment which might have retarded, for some days, the march of the army:—an army which, in spite of the rapidity of its movements, never could get in sight of an enemy, not even in the impregnable pass of Antrodoco! And while many a German liberal of pure water has lamented, that Niebuhr did not believe in the saving efficacy of written constitutions of the growth of 1789,—the apostles of mediæval institutions, and maintainers of abuses and injustice in Germany, have quoted him as an authority against the constitutional system as interpreted and developed in England since William III. To understand what his views were on this subject, and whether he changed them or not at different periods of his life, the only fair method seems to be, not to quote sharp occasional

words and momentary effusions of his letters, but to consult the deliberate declarations and professions of his historical and political writings. In this feeling, Niebuhr's son has, with wise piety, prefixed to the edition of his father's "Lectures on the Age of the French Revolution," passages from his published or unpublished writings, bearing on these subjects ; and I am sure your readers will be obliged to you for having inserted that instructive collection in your third volume. Those extracts extend from the earliest years of his political career to the end of his life ; and, while they exhibit a glorious proof of the unity of his political ideas, and the constancy of his political faith, are confirmed by minor passages in his works and letters (unpublished as well as published), by his teaching, and last not least, by his life.

Instead of extracting or referring to those passages, I shall permit myself to express, in my own way, Niebuhr's political creed, condensing faithfully and succinctly that political instruction, which I received from his lips, in a life of intimate and almost daily intercourse, in Rome during the years from 1817 to 1823,—the principles which I then learned and endeavoured to make my own by independent study and observation, and which I feel sure of being able to reproduce in their substantial originality. What I heard from Niebuhr in those years, I heard him repeat, in still stronger terms, at the first and last personal meeting, which we enjoyed between his departure from Rome and his premature death. Of his letters to me during that period, I shall produce, on this occasion, only such political extracts as bear upon his public life and upon the particular points in question,

and such as I can extract without too great a mutilation. You know that when his admirable friend Madame Hensler was collecting materials for his life, I declined communicating the letters he addressed to me. I knew that they could not be published in their most important parts without frequent omissions, and I had, at an early period, made a vow to commit to paper what I had heard from Niebuhr on the subject of Prussian and general politics, foreseeing how party-spirit and other motives would endeavour to misinterpret or veil that creed of his. I can at present do no more than begin to redeem that vow ; for I could not do justice to the subject, without entering, more fully than I am now able, into those general topics with which a complete delineation of Niebuhr's political character is necessarily connected. When the time is come to speak historically of the years from 1806 to 1830, the letters in my possession will not be wanting. They are in safe keeping, and perhaps my commentary upon them will also be found ready. It will then be seen clearly how foolish was the supposition of some writers of the day, that our friendship and intercourse had ceased after Niebuhr's departure.\*

Not too much, however, must be expected as to details respecting cotemporary politics, from a correspondence between Rome and Bonn ; for Niebuhr knew as well as I, that every one of our letters, sent through the post, was opened and read, at least twice before it reached its destination. A heavy despondency

\* The thirty-two letters I preserve since our separation are the most intimate as well as the most affectionate he ever wrote to me, and, not least so, those of the last two years of his life.

lay upon the mind of Germany during that portentous period. Indignation at the shameless tyranny of the secret police, and the fear of involving one's self or one's friends in persecutions, bound the tongue and paralysed the hand of the correspondent on anything connected with public institutions; for even where confidential channels of communication offered themselves, letters were always dangerous to the bearer.

The elder men among the German liberals of that time, consisted in great part of abettors of the foreign tyrant,—of men who had kissed the rod and licked the feet of the satellites of the great oppressor. The younger generation were most of them indiscriminating admirers of the French opposition and of France altogether; for, as to England, her political men and measures, before Canning became Prime Minister, exercised as little influence upon public opinion on the continent as upon the policy of the Cabinets. Even politicians of note hoped for the golden age from the mock-parliamentary system, crudely, ignorantly, and perniciously engrafted upon the iron despotism of paralysing, centralised bureaucracy, and tried upon exclusively, or all but exclusively, Catholic populations. Nor is that admiration of French institutions to be wondered at, if we recollect what men in England, who were considered great philosophers and statesmen, said and hoped of France and her constitutional liberty even in 1848, and how they worshipped France as the head of European civilisation!

It was therefore natural that Niebuhr should not converse or correspond with his liberal cotemporaries in Germany. But, in general, Niebuhr had since 1823, and

still more so since 1825, resigned politics, as much as it was possible for him,—not out of indifference, but because they were in every way painful to him. Fortunately his political convictions are faithfully and vividly expressed in his historical works and political essays of that period.

The best method of representing Niebuhr's constitutional creed seems to be, to consider it first in its great outlines as to European politics in general, and then with special application to Germany and Prussia. Now, his leading principles as to constitutional questions, from a general European point of view, may be compressed into the following propositions.

Europe is threatened with great dangers, and with the loss of all that is noble and great, by two opposite but conspiring elements of destruction,—despotism and revolution; both in their most mischievous forms. As to the former, the modern state despotism, established by Louis XIV., promoted by the French Revolution, and carried out to unenviable perfection by Napoleon, and those Governments which have adopted his system, after having combated its author,—is more enslaving and deadening than any preceding form; for it is civilised and systematised, and has, besides the military force, two engines, unknown to the ancient world, or to the Middle Ages. These are, first, the modern state-government, founded upon a police-force which has degenerated into a gigantic spy-system; and, secondly, a thoroughly organised and centralised bureaucracy, which allows of no independent will and action in the country. So, likewise, modern revolution is more destructive of political life and the elements of liberty than similar

movements in former ages ; for it is a merely negative, and, at the same time, systematic reaction, against the *ancien régime*, of which it made the despotic part universal by carrying out uniformity, and by autocratic interference in the name of the State ; whereas it gives no equivalent for the real, although imperfect, liberties which the old system contained, in the form of privileges ; and in condemning such privileges, under the sanction of democracy, it destroyed the basis of liberty under the pretext of sovereignty. The *ancien régime* had, indeed, made a similar attempt in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The philosophical Catherine had made Russian serfdom universal and uniform ; so, too, Peter Leopold, the liberal Grand Duke of Tuscany, had swept away, for the love of state-uniformity, the last remnants of the municipal independence of Tuscany ; and his imperial brother, Joseph, had attempted to confiscate the Hungarian privileges in behoof of absolute kingship. Yet more utterly had the French Revolution destroyed the last living germs of continental liberties, in the name of liberty. All freedom which had escaped the irregular oppression of the barons in the Middle Ages, was now destroyed, together with the privileges of the latter, by a stroke of the pen. Whatever had survived the reaction of the not yet quite adult despotism of the Roman Catholic dynasties after the Reformation, and the philosophical liberalism of the autocrats of the eighteenth century,—among whom Frederic the Great alone makes an exception,—was swept away theoretically by that Revolution. This universal despotism was to be recom-

mended as freedom by the two beautiful words—Equality and Liberty; that is to say, the abolition of the privileges of the nobility, and the cessation of religious persecution and intolerance. The first was in reality a bloody confiscation for the benefit of the rulers; and the second a cheap homage to the claims of reason, offered by an age of religious indifference. The immense triumphs of the Revolution in Roman Catholic countries, were owing to the despair created by an effete aristocracy and a hypocritical priesthood. In the rest of Europe, its success was commensurate with the defects of the old system and the inward power of reform, but it never showed the malignity of the disease, exclusively proper to the countries where it was indigenous,—France and the South of Europe.

You will see, my dear Miss Winkworth, that Niebuhr's system was that of a German Burke, but without Burke's blindness as to the deepest causes of the evil, and to the incurable corruptions of the South European Governments and States. It was, indeed, to Burke that Niebuhr always directed me as to political principles, but, at the same time, he used to add: "But Pitt was the statesman, not Burke; and he would have made peace with France, at an early period, if the others would have let him." "England" so continued Niebuhr, "has preserved, fortified, and developed her liberty, and this liberty she owes to her Protestantism, and to that legitimate and happy consequence of the Reformation,—the honest and temperate settlement of 1688." Niebuhr used to say, that Hume's misrepresentations of the misdeeds of the Stuarts amounted to downright dishonesty. He

venerated the Puritan spirit of the Covenanters, and loved the Hutchinsons and similar noble characters of the Revolution, as he called the struggle of 1642; but he often said, "It is the constitutional monarchy, as settled by the Whigs of 1688, that has saved England."

As for Germany, he considered that the Thirty Years' War had been the virtual destruction of that country, as a Whole. But, according to him, Protestant Germany had preserved the germ of a regeneration by organic process, under the patriotic and enlightened princes, who constructed the Prussian monarchy out of the ruins of the Germanic Empire. They began by protecting the people against the rapacity and unblushing selfishness of the Brandenburg barons, and carried out the principles of Protestantism by an honest dictatorial administration, of which there is no parallel in history. But, if the revolution of 1789 is the breaking out of a local disease, peculiar to the Roman Catholic nations and governments of Southern Europe, it ought to have been met at its very commencement by great and sincere national reforms. These, indeed, took place in Prussia, but only after the disasters of 1806 and 1807, and were not carried out as completely as they ought to have been.

Constitutional monarchy was to him, not the beginning but the end, not the root but the ripened fruit of the tree of liberty. In Niebuhr's view, the foundation of political liberty was municipal self-government; or, as he used to call it, a free administration—"freie Verwaltung." Without that basis, the legislative power of Parliament itself was, to him, either a *mauvaise plaisanterie*, or a mischievous experiment.



Here we are arrived at the centre of Niebuhr's constitutional policy. Here is the pivot of his political system. He thought it as absurd and mischievous to begin with the parliamentary system (like the French Revolution, and all its imitators), as to create, or rather to restore self-government in Europe, while stopping short of constitutional liberty. The first error appeared to him, as if a man should plant a tree without a root, while the second was like expecting it to bear fruit without being allowed to blossom ; or, he might have compared the one system to the mad endeavour to begin a house by the roof ; whereas the other was as wise as to build a dwelling-house with a good foundation, but neglect to roof it in due time ; and then to wonder and complain that the inhabitants did not feel comfortable !

All his political conversations with me, when treating the constitutional question, turned upon this point. He often expressed to me his regret that the spirit of the age, and the plan of his great work had made Montesquieu consider the parliamentary system isolated from its basis,—municipal liberty and self-government. " Montesquieu," he once said, "knew that well ; but it is the tragical fate of great men, that the defects or weak points of their system are made their principal merit and strong side, whereas, the best things they say, remain a dead letter." He applied this in particular to the theory of the division of powers. " Montesquieu's exposition," he said, "is too abstract and absolute : but the French might as well have evolved out of it a good and wise system, as a vicious and foolish. This arose out of the one-sidedness

and conceit of the men of 1789. Now the Empire," he would continue, "has done absolutely nothing but destroy a liberty which had neither a basis in the moral honesty of the people, nor in the practice of municipal self-government, and put in its place the most irresistible and destructive system of despotism which the world ever saw, covered with the lying colours of liberty, and the rags of democracy."

Niebuhr, like Stein, had hailed, therefore, the Bourbon restoration with the hopefulness peculiar to Germans. They believed that the bloody lessons of the past might have brought that dynasty into the right path. Great was his disappointment, when they accepted *utilement*,—as the diplomatic phrase runs,—the whole despotic system of the empire. The improved scaffolding of administrative despotism remained as it was; "*la belle unité de la France*," which is nothing but uniformity, continued to be the idol to which every consideration was to be sacrificed, and the constitutional machine was suspended in the air, as if waiting for the first strong wind to blow it down. Neither an independent and national aristocracy was raised, nor a respectable popular power formed by the ambition and experience of municipal and provincial life.

It may not be uninteresting here to enter into some personal details. Niebuhr had never expected anything from the shallow liberalism of Decazes, who passed an electoral law, having no root in corporations and municipalities, and giving no guarantee to the Government. Niebuhr used to appeal to Aristotle, who calls timocracy (the modern system of attaching the electoral franchise

to a fixed amount of income or rent) the fag-end and corruption of aristocracy ; nor would he allow its extension to be really liberal when unaccompanied by other principles, as station, or membership of a municipal, learned, or social body.

I well remember, however, that he was still more shocked by the avowals of the Duc de Blacas. That statesman was sent to Rome as ambassador, having also certain general instructions to watch the movements of the Napoleonides in Italy. He courted Niebuhr's friendship, and was happy to find in him a political adversary of Decazes. But when Niebuhr expressed to him his astonishment and regret, that the authors of the Charter of 1814 (the Duc de Blacas and the Abbé Montesquiou), had omitted in its articles the fundamental principles of electoral law, which were the key to the whole constitutional system, the duke, hard pressed by the inquisitive colleague, whom no evasive answer would satisfy, said roundly ; "*pour vous dire la vérité, nous n'avions pas cru qu'on nous prendrait au sérieux.*" This answer first gave Niebuhr an insight into the unfathomable depth of the ignorance and perfidy of the Bourbons and their friends, and shook his faith in the plans and the ultimate fate of the Restoration. His misgivings were much strengthened by the confidential communications of the two eminent French statesmen, Pourtalès (the elder) and Pasquier, who came to Rome to assist Blacas in the conclusion of the Concordat. Both were delighted at finding in Niebuhr a man to whom every detail, not only of French history, but also of administration and

finance, both before and since the Revolution, were present at every moment. "You are quite right," said Pourtalis, "the Revolution and the Empire have consummated the work of despotism founded by Louis XIV. I know from my father, and my own observation, the importance of local liberties in the *pays d'état*, before 1789; and supposing our system of administration should follow the right direction, it would require a whole generation to make local liberties take really root in the soil of France. But there is no prospect of that; the conservative statesmen all declaim against ministerial despotism, and the centralisation of the prefects; but no sooner do they get into power, than they declare that it is impossible to govern France by any other means, and the system of patronage is so sweet, that very soon they make out of necessity a virtue." With regard to the prospects of France, Pasquier was still more explicit:—"The Comte d'Artois is incorrigible. It has been my duty to observe him in the time of the Empire: he will sell France to the clergy and to the Jesuits. The end must be a revolution, but the struggle will be very hard: for young France is divided into two camps, who hate each other mortally: the one is almost republican, and the other is brought up by the *Frères ignorants*, and in the episcopal seminaries, into which the future clergy enter as early as the twelfth year, to come out as priests. All these hate our present system on account of the religious freedom, and the liberty of the press, which it sanctions in principle."

These and similar communications made a very deep impression upon Niebuhr. When speaking on these

topics, he always told me, "not to read, but to study" all the political writings of that remarkable man, Fiévée,\* of whom Niebuhr used to say, that he was the only modern French writer, not blind to the incorrigible defects of the centralisation system, and that he might be called the Burke of France, if he had Burke's English heart and honesty.

Notwithstanding the defects of the Restoration and his own sad forebodings, Niebuhr never ceased to hope the best from the royalist party in France : for he found that the liberals of the opposition were to a man blind to the fundamental error of their system. "You will see," he said one day to me, "that Villèle, who is a real statesman, and as a financier only second to Roy, will force the Court-party to concede to him, if not the establishment of free charters for the great towns, at least the creation of a national peerage, formed so as to include the most influential men in the present society of France, and comprising therefore men like Casimir Périer. At all events, it is an immense blessing for France, and for Europe too, that we have the Bourbons and the principle of constitutional law, instead of Napoleon and the Empire with all its curses."

These hopes, and this political faith, were not shaken by the revolutionary movements in Spain, Naples and Sardinia, in 1820 and 1821. For Italy, he expected nothing from the liberals of the day : he saw they were blind admirers of French constitutionalism, and were endeavouring to establish political freedom by revolu-

\* I allude to the "Correspondance administrative et politique," and his "Histoire des Sessions."

tionised armies. In Spain, he believed that there were more germs of political liberty, both on account of its glorious recollections before Ximenes and Philip II., and because there still existed some courage and remains of municipal life in the juntas. But he had no patience with the foolhardiness and imbecility of the Spanish statesmen, who were quick and successful in destroying, but incapable of building up; and had produced a constitution with which nobody could honestly govern, because, according to it, the power resided nowhere. He foresaw that these revolutions would end, like the French, in military tyranny, and strengthen the cause of despotism, which he detested more than they. In these anticipations he was sadly confirmed by two men, with whom he became acquainted at the end of 1822 and in the beginning of 1823, and who, from brotherhood of genius and similarity of character, became in a few months his intimate friends,—the Count de Serre, late Garde des Sceaux in France, and Count Zurlo, who had been Minister of the Interior, under Murat and Ferdinand VII. of Naples. They destroyed his last delusions respecting the Bourbon Court, and the hopes of liberty connected with those dynasties themselves. His Neapolitan friend opened to him the whole abyss of the personal cruelty of Ferdinand, the fruit of uncontrollable cowardice. He showed him, that the executions which took place at Naples under the re-actionary junta of 1799, had swept away all the most noble, aspiring and virtuous individuals of that country; and that the royal government which had been restored had no other intentions than to govern by

Swiss regiments, by an army of *gensd'armes* and secret spies, and by the ever-obedient clergy, mortal enemies of every sort of liberty and of progress.

When Niebuhr gave up the last illusions of a noble and generous heart, to the convictions of a statesman-like head, he did not on that account, change his view of the nature and consequences of the revolutions in those countries. He always maintained, that they benefitted no cause but that of absolutism and military despotism. When, after an interval of more than five years, I met him again at Bonn, in May, 1828, he was, as William von Humboldt had been many years before, resigned to very slight hopes as regarded the great features of European policy. He foresaw revolutions and violent changes everywhere on the Continent, and he was deeply wounded by the crude and despotic views of influential members of the Conservative party in England, with regard to the Continent, and even to Protestant Germany. "Short-sighted men!" he exclaimed, "who, in 1815, did not see the folly of leaving Germany defenceless on her western frontier, and Prussia weak, and who have not even now learnt so much as to distinguish between a limited but genuine liberty, and wild democratic schemes. I know very well, that in their heart they think me revolutionary, if I contradict them in their ignorant assertions, although they do me the honour of saying that I am not aware of it."

Still he could not make up his mind to give up the Bourbon Restoration, and to believe that a revolution in France was near at hand. Of this I had a remarkable

instance, in a curious incident. When, in the summer of 1829, Pius VIII. had been elected successor to Leo XII., the cardinal's hat was given to Latil, formerly as Abbé Latil, the Confessor of the Comte D'Artois and of his mistress,—later, as Archbishop of Rheims, the prelate who anointed Charles X. Diplomatic dinners preceded and followed this great ceremony. At a dinner given on this occasion, at the Russian embassy, the Cardinal, after a joyous repast, entered into a private conversation with Prince Gagarin, the Russian Minister, with the import of which the Prince, who was "*homme d'esprit*," and very fond of fun, made me acquainted on the spot. The Cardinal had said to him: "Prince, we,"—meaning the King and the Cardinal, or the Cardinal and the King,—“have come to the conviction, that two things are incompatible—the Catholic Church and the constitutional Charter. *We* see that we must choose between them, and our option has been made. You will believe me, Prince, it has not been difficult. You will soon hear more of it. We must modify the Charter, in order to make it compatible with the precepts of the Catholic Church ; and we are decided to do so soon.” We both agreed that this was a most important revelation, and that vanity and wine had made Latil say more than a confessor and a cardinal ought to have divulged. The manner in which he had said those words was such, that it was impossible not to believe that he spoke the secret of the Cabinet. And indeed, when, a few days afterwards, he received, under a princely dais, the red hat from the Pope's Ablegate, instead of answering his congratulations,



as other cardinals used to do, with a few words of thanks, he made a set speech, evidently learnt by heart, and delivered with great emphasis, in which he said :—" Tell the Holy Father, that I am fully aware of the duties and responsibilities, which this highest honour imposes upon me in the situation which I hold. My conduct will show my sense of duty, and my gratitude."

Of course, Prince Gagarin and I did not fail to convey this important intelligence to our respective Courts. Now I was particularly anxious to make Niebuhr aware of the state of things, thus revealed to me. But, as it was of a very confidential nature, and not exactly fit for my customers at some post-offices on the way, I confined myself, as far as I can recollect, in the next letter to Niebuhr, to general expressions ; but, in order to leave him no doubt as to my own conviction respecting the fast approaching crisis in France, I dated a series of letters and notes to Niebuhr, "Capitol, 1687." Niebuhr overlooked this hint for a time, but in his last letter (of which I give a remarkable extract), he adverted to it in something like these words : " I perceive what you mean by 1687, but I cannot yet believe that the crisis is so near at hand in France ;" to which I remember to have replied, in something like the following phrase : " If I predict a 1688 for France, I do not forget, that it will not be a real 1688, for that is impossible without a preceding 1517" (a religious and moral Reformation of the people).

I proceed, now, to Niebuhr's German and Prussian politics ; and here Niebuhr had himself a considerable part in the reforms of 1808, 1809, and 1810, of which

the most precious documents, digested and commented upon by an eminent and virtuous historian, are now before the public, in Stein's "Leben," edited by Pertz. I shall consider this part of Niebuhr's political creed, exactly like the other, from the central point of his political system ;—that there can be no perfect political liberty, without an honest, real, constitutional government, but that there can be no hope of its taking real root in the country, except in a soil prepared by corporative, county, and provincial self-government.

Stein, Schön, and Niebuhr are the three men who were perfectly conscious of this truth, among the actors of this first part of that great drama, which can only find its historian when it will be completed, and will have risen above conflicting class-interests and individual passions. Stein's acts and thoughts are now before the public : Schön, the only survivor of those heroes, has written his memoirs, to be published after his death : Niebuhr's memoir on a constitution for Prussia must be somewhere in the archives, for he spoke to me of it in Rome, as a work belonging to the past. But his leading views, as I collected them from repeated conversations, were the following :—

For a State constituted like Prussia, a monarchy composed of provinces, all German, with the exception of half Germanised Posen, but having each its own history, institutions, and character,—there are three distinct degrees of political organisation which must precede the full developement of the constitutional system, and which alone can guarantee its stability.

The first is the organisation of towns, *Städte-*

*Verfassung*, Niebuhr, therefore, agreed entirely with the fundamental measures of Stein. He knew that the system of self-election to the Town Councils, which had become very general in the fifteenth century, had been fatal to the cities ; to which Germany, like Italy, owes almost everything that has placed her name high in the arts, and in science. The Town Councils, once rendered independent of their fellow-citizens, soon forgot that they were instituted merely for the public good (not to say that they all had an elective origin), and fondly imagined that the city existed for their sake. The abolition of the municipal rights in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had therefore on the whole been rather popular.

Niebuhr knew that the plan of inviting every citizen to inspect and examine the accounts at will, had proved an illusory formality : nobody came, and the magistrates ruled without control. The institution of the town-deputation (*Stadtverordnete*), elected by the householders for a definite period, and themselves electing the Mayor and Town Council (*Stadtrath*), was the organism suggested both by reason and experience. They were to have their regular meetings, to vote the supplies, to inspect the accounts, and control the executive. Everybody knows that this is the outline of the constitution of the cities in Prussia, which with different modifications has outlived, not only the re-action of the Thirty Years' Peace, but also the Revolution of 1848. Here, it is only my province to give your readers a general idea of Niebuhr's individual views, which were not, indeed, realised, but to which he clung to the end

of his life, as is amply shown by his writings and letters. The Prussian law on the municipal constitutions was not intended to establish uniformity, but it did so in fact, because the margin left for individual developement (I may say, too, for perfectly independent action, without government control) was not large enough. Niebuhr, whose leading idea was, that every life is individual, and that every generalisation remains, more or less, a dead letter, wished that the great cities, such as Berlin, Königsberg, Breslau, Cologne, should be called upon to draw up a constitution within the framework of the general law, in conformity with their customs and existing conditions, not excluding even in some cases noble historical recollections. When in Rome, about the year 1820, he studied the Chronicle of Cologne, he was at first inclined to draw up such a plan himself for that ancient and noble city, which dates from the earliest imperial times of Rome. He afterwards gave it up, from seeing that this idea could only be fully realised by one living on the spot, and feeling repulsed by the shallowness of the reigning Frenchified liberalism. His true liberalism desired not less independence, but more—both for the burgesses and the Town Council: but by the side of that independence, he desired a strong Government, both in the towns and the kingdom at large. Niebuhr's anticipations, both of the blessings of the institution as a whole, and of the defects of the actual law, have, I believe, been fully realised by the experience of now almost half a century. With regard to the political organisation of the country districts, which was

demanded at once by the principles of a sound political economy, by justice, and by the political position of Prussia,—Niebuhr, of course, entirely coincided with Stein as to the necessity of the full emancipation of the peasantry, and the abolition of serfdom, manorial rights, and statute labour, the lord of the manor receiving an adequate compensation. Niebuhr even thought the law, as afterwards passed by Hardenberg, in 1811, an infinite boon ; although he deplored its sweeping uniformity in details, and the awkwardness of the machinery invented to carry it out. But what he really lamented were two points which I shall endeavour to explain in a few words.

According to Niebuhr, the possibility of self-government in the country districts, and consequently, of political liberty for the greater part of the population, rested upon two bases, of one of which Niebuhr found the ideal in England ; but the other of which existed, in his opinion, in a much more natural and sound state in Germany, than in that classical land of liberty ;—the one is a resident gentry, and the other a free and independent yeomanry. He thought that in England the disappearance of a real yeomanry, scarcely now existing except in a few “statesmen” in the north, was politically not an advantage, but the contrary. The new law of Hardenberg rendered possible the restoration of the free peasant order (*Bauern-stand*), the ancient birthright of Germany, which had been encroached upon by baronial usurpation, particularly in the provinces reconquered from a Slavonic population. But in order to enable the yeoman to maintain his independence, after

giving up one half or two-thirds of the ground he occupied by hereditary tenure to the manorial lord in order to have the rest free to himself, Niebuhr thought it absolutely necessary to revive and render imperative the old Saxon law of succession, according to which, the estate descends as a unity to the eldest son, who in his turn pays a small sum of money to the younger brothers, and gives a dowry to the sisters. "What," he used to exclaim, "can be the end of the French system of infinite divisibility of the soil, except general poverty, a struggle between anarchy and despotism, and the final triumph of that military tyranny of which the Empire exhibited the frightful perfection?"

This remained one of Niebuhr's most abiding convictions, as among others, some of the extracts of my letters of 1823 will show.

Now for such a yeomanry, living in villages (*Dörfer*), in the German sense of the word, Niebuhr wanted the restoration of their old and simple municipal self-government under their reeves (*Gräben* or *Schulzen*). But, on the other hand, Niebuhr did not lose sight of the necessity of placing by the side of this pure village self-administration, an aristocratic element composed of the gentry of the district (*Kreis*), or, as you would say, the county. Now, Niebuhr thought that, impossible as the execution of such a plan would be in France, all the elements for an aristocratic, and, at the same time, national gentry existed in northern Germany. The Anglo-Saxon gentleman loves as well as his richer brother in this island, to reside in the country, live as a farmer and do his own business as member of the parish and district, like their

common ancestors in the time of Tacitus, who settled "*ubi nemus, ubi rivus invitat*," free from the restraint of towns, but at the same time combined to do the business of the *Gau* (county), and to judge as members of a jury. Niebuhr thought nothing would be more feasible, than to organise the resident gentry of a Prussian county into a body like the justices of the peace in England, supposing sufficient regard were had to the peculiarities of each of the eight provinces.

This idea was also his leading principle, with regard to the organisation of Provincial Councils or Parliaments (*Provincial-Stände*). There, too, Niebuhr wished to see the native genuine elements of landed aristocracy coalesce into one great, honoured, national body, not founded upon any exclusive privilege of caste, but the entrance into which should be open to every gentleman of education, property, and standing.

But here, Niebuhr was met by two opposite national prejudices. Let me therefore begin with reminding you, that what you call the nobility in England, consists with us of the present sovereign princes of Germany, and the houses of some princes or earls of the Empire. These latter are therefore the only element of individual peerage which the country offers (about eighteen in the Prussian monarchy). They, as a whole, keep up their position very well, by the system of entails, which, according to the actual state of Germany, it is evidently wise to maintain in perpetuity. Less miserable than before they ceased to exercise mock sovereignty under the nominal supremacy of the Empire, they still want an adequate political position. Prussia always felt that

she could afford to grant them such a position, and Niebuhr heartily concurred in this view.

All the rest of what is called nobility in Germany, is of a provincial character, and under different names, as Counts, Barons (of whom in reality there are fewer than Counts), and simple *Herrn von* (Seigneurs de), or Baronets. All these were originally the equestrian order,—*Ritterstand*; and were all possessed of landed property. But most of them had no entail to protect them: this circumstance, and the *Brief-Adel*, or the granting of nobility by letters patent, shook the independence of this country-nobility; and the want of political liberty in the nation at large gave it the character of a caste. A great part of this nobility, particularly in the Province of Brandenburg, entered into the service of the Court, and thus into the high civil offices of the State. Prussia is justly proud of the great names of these equestrian families, particularly in the army. Their glory is coeval with that of the reigning dynasty and of the nation. Nobody felt and appreciated this more than Niebuhr; he delighted in the Spartan frugality of members of those families who are satisfied with a less than moderate pay, without any fortune of their own, to fight the battles of their Prince and grow old in glorious poverty. But politically, Niebuhr lamented the inveterate abuse of continuing the identity of title to all the members of a family, however numerous; in consequence of which, and of the natural changes in human affairs, it has come to pass that the greater part of landed property, including the originally manorial estates or fiefs-noble, has gone out of the hands



of those (for the greatest part historical) equestrian families ; and that the infinite majority of the *Herrn von*, including many of the Barons and Counts, are in reality possessors of nothing. Unfortunately the more these gentlemen lost their landed property, the most natural basis of political importance, especially in a monarchy, the more they felt disposed to defend their few social privileges and shadows of by-gone power, and delighted in the position of a caste. They therefore, called (as they still call) Stein and Hardenberg men of the Revolution, robbers, democrats, and similar epithets, and showed themselves most unwisely pertinacious in insisting upon their exclusive right of presentation at Court (*Hoffähigkeit*, which, according to their notion, a lady forfeits by marrying even a very high functionary of the non-equestrian class), and more than all the rest, the exemption of their fiefs-noble from the land-tax, in the provinces on the east of the Elbe. Niebuhr regretted the blindness and the want of patriotism of these men, knowing that their foolish spirit of caste had irritated all the gentry of non-equestrian (*bürgerliche*) families, gentlemen of equal education and independence of character, and immensely their superiors in property.

It was natural that this national gentry and the rich merchants and manufacturers of the towns, should resent such pretensions, and oppose the pride of nobility (*Adelstolz*) by the pride of commoners (*Bürgerstolz*) ; and not only should not seek, but often even decline titles of nobility, although qualified both by station and property to assume them.

"This is a most distressing and pernicious state of things," Niebuhr has often said to me, "and will be productive of increasing discontent, and perhaps of revolution: but let the blame rest with those who, during the whole time, have cared for nothing except their own caste interest, and have called forth such a spirit; let us pledge each other our word, that neither of us ever will accept a title of nobility until all these pretensions are both legally and virtually abolished. In that case, I believe it would be a patriotic work to aspire to a hereditary position for our families."

If such opinions were of course Jacobinical in the eyes of the *Junkersparthei*, Niebuhr's proposals for the organisation of a resident gentry, based upon property, and deriving titles from the same, if they liked, displeased his friends among the *bourgeoisie*. "It was on this point that I split very early with some of my political friends at Berlin," Niebuhr used to say, "because I never would concur in their plans for an organisation of the country which was merely theoretical and impossible to execute, and moreover mischievous, as precluding the amalgamation of the two classes of gentry, and nourishing democratic principles by the natural spirit of reaction against a presumptuous and egotistical pride."

These observations will, I suppose, throw the necessary light upon some extracts of Niebuhr's correspondence with me. It now only remains for me to say a few words on Niebuhr's principles respecting the application of the constitutional system of England to Prussia.

Niebuhr held very cheap the theories of most of the

modern constitutionalists in or out of Germany, and still more so the application made of them since 1789. He despised, therefore, the constitutions in the smaller German states, extorted by financial or dynastic necessities, and other embarrassments of the moment, as in Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt and Bavaria,—and more or less based upon the French system of all-absorbing bureaucracy, interlarded with certain abstract liberal phrases. He had foreseen what happened, that the despotic part remained efficient, but that the liberal paragraphs were quashed by ordinances, having the force of law ; that every real liberty of the press was cramped by the chicaneries of the police, and in case of need,—that is, whenever the people appeared uneasy,—by an appeal to the Bund.

What Niebuhr wanted, besides that organic basis and substructure of which I have spoken, was that in Prussia an honest progress should be made towards real constitutional government, by two Chambers. Of these, he would have had the Second emanate from direct popular election, based upon property and corporative rights, but neither composed of functionaries more or less dependent on, or of candidates recommending themselves to, their constituents as theoretical reformers and democratic constitution-mongers. As to the First, his favourite idea was to connect it with the Provincial Chambers by constituting the latter as an electoral body. I believe his more developed views on this subject were something like the following :—Each of the Provincial Chambers was to name, for life, or for the duration of a Parliament, a certain number

of Peers, out of the equestrian order. In a similar way, equestrian corporations in each province were to send to the Imperial House of Peers, a certain number, as is practised here respecting the Irish and Scotch Peers.

He knew very well that it was impossible to constitute an efficient House of Peers out of the few existing born Peers of the realm ; but he believed that the principle of collective peerage, coupled with the elections issuing from the eight Provincial Chambers, would furnish a dignified and national first Chamber. I am sure that the idea of direct popular elections for the first Chamber would have been an abomination to him.

When at Rome, Niebuhr generally declined, with a painful expression of his countenance and soul-full eye, to enter into details on this subject. He had resigned for his life all hope of seeing the schemes of the years 1808 and 1809, realised. He had taken a higher position with the resignation of a Christian philosopher, but with the unaltered conviction of a Galileo, who says to himself, "*e pur si muove.*" It is this Galileo feeling which bursts out in the Preface to the second edition of his "Roman History" (in 1826). "As to the principles on which I have proceeded in my political judgments, there is not one which may not be found in Montesquieu or Burke ; and the Spanish proverb suffices : '*quien hace aplicacion con su pan se lo coma*' (whoever makes the application, eats it as his daily bread)." In referring to those two classical authors, Niebuhr knew full well that the partisans of despotic government in Europe, hate monarchical Montesquieu and conservative Burke infinitely more than all republican and democratic

writers, because they detest true constitutional monarchy, much more than all other forms of, or attempts at, free government.

And this brings me, my dear Miss Winkworth, to the second point about which you so earnestly wish to have some explanation. I allude to the events which, in June 1810, led Niebuhr to resign his office in the Ministry of Finances, and avail himself of his privilege, as member of the Academy of Sciences at Berlin, to deliver those lectures, of which in 1811 the first part was published under the title of the "History of Rome," 1st vol. You have so lucidly explained the general political situation in which Niebuhr found himself in the spring of 1810, that it would be useless to enter into details respecting the depths of confusion into which the finances of Prussia had been thrown since Stein had been proscribed and expelled. After his retreat, it was not thought advisable to appeal to great national motives; for the plan of a national representation had been tacitly but positively given up, and thus the basis of a really saving plan of political and financial regeneration was destroyed. In order to bring Prussia to despair, Napoleon insisted upon the payment of the remnant of the contribution of war, designedly swelled by never-ending tyrannical exactions. Altenstein's pusillanimity went so far as to dare to propose to the King the cession of Silesia; the Court-party, stirred up by the King, who was disgusted with such a scheme, entered into negotiation with Hardenberg, who, after having made his peace with Napoleon, accepted the Premiership with full powers (except on the constitutional question), and

drew up, with Prince Wittgenstein, a plan which Altenstein, as well as Niebuhr, found impracticable and full of dangers. Niebuhr boldly opposed this plan, as he had opposed Altenstein's. Schön, having been called to Berlin, joined him, but their representations remaining unheeded by Hardenberg, Niebuhr used his privilege, as a Privy Councillor, of laying a memorial (unfortunately still unpublished) before the King. This last resort failed : Hardenberg insisted upon Niebuhr's communicating to him his plan, which he had elaborated with Schön, and which, indeed, would have required Stein, as Prime Minister, or at least his political ideas, as presiding over the financial counsels. Now, fortunately, it can by documents be placed beyond all doubt, what Niebuhr's character alone ought to suffice to make us believe. Niebuhr was so far from wishing to force himself upon Hardenberg, that when the Chancellor, despairing to make a tool of him, came to the unheard-of condescension of offering the Ministry of Finances to him, in spite of his being a commoner, he declined it, unless his conditions were complied with. Here, then, Niebuhr found himself arrived at the great critical point of his public life. Was he to try what an honest and skilful man might do when in power, even under the most difficult circumstances ? Indeed Stein thought at the time he ought ; \* but Niebuhr's financial plans were based upon great political resolutions, although not upon any rash measures. He did not think the country could be saved, and the public credit truly restored, without holding out to the nation a prospect that the political progress begun would

\* See vol. i. p. 233.

be continued, and crowned by a national representation. But instead of such prospects, he saw nothing but conflicting schemes, false financially and politically, leading to disappointment and ruin. He could take part neither for Altenstein nor for Hardenberg.

In this state of things, a moral indignation seized him, coupled with a just consciousness of his powers, and his vocation for the sphere of truth and for the tranquil service of the muses. What can be finer than the touching simplicity of his words to Madame Hensler, contained in his letter of 23rd of April, 1810 (440)! I cannot state my own opinion as to his resolution better than in the words of Stein's excellent historian, who, after that passage to which you have also alluded (Stein's *Leben*, ii. p. 508), says :—

“When Hardenberg offered Niebuhr to name him Minister of Finance, Niebuhr would not have hesitated in accepting it, if he had had any prospect of being able to remain true to his principles in such a position. But ‘frugality, the greatest possible retrenchment of expenses, consistent with the due performance of the public service, and the just claims of individuals, the encouragement of sources of industry; the lightest possible burdens, and those regulated according to local and other circumstances; conscientious and sagacious appointments to office, and a strict superintendence of the administration,’\* would not, as he knew, be the characteristics of the Hardenberg administration; as before, so Hardenberg now sought, not fellow-workers, acting freely within their respective departments, according to their own conscience and sagacity; but mere subordinate instruments, entirely devoted to himself; and Niebuhr declined his offer. In so doing, he followed with full

\* Letter to Madame Hensler, of May 8th, 1808.

consciousness the conviction that it is not permissible to seek good ends by bad means, or communion with the wicked; that the upright man, even if he possess the talent to fight intriguers with their own weapons, must not do it, under the idea of being useful, nor even be seduced into doing what he would not stand up and defend."

What then shall I say of the unworthy charge which the recent biographer of Hardenberg, M. L. Klose, has brought against Niebuhr,—that on this occasion he acted the part of an intriguer? Certainly not much historical judgment can be expected from a man who gives credence to the assertion of Dorow, a man who enjoyed no moral authority or public esteem. This writer, in his chit-chat recollections relates, that Hardenberg once told him Stein had a whole evening fawned on him, *ad nauseam*, in order to obtain from him some favour. Whether Dorow really heard something like it from Hardenberg or not, history will form its judgment, as the German public has long since done, upon the tenor of the whole life of one of the leading statesmen of Europe in those momentous times. In Germany such statements bear the impress of falsehood upon their face. The best proof of the untruth of the charge against Niebuhr is that Hardenberg himself, as well as the King, treated Niebuhr with the highest respect, not only in that latter correspondence, of which I give extracts below, but throughout life.\*

\* See "Hardenberg's Leben," by Klose, p. 265. Hardenberg wrote about this date to \* \* \*, (as related by Friedrich v. Raumer, then with him): "You know that I communicated my financial scheme to the Privy Councillor Niebuhr, and begged him to give me his opinion of it. He has now sent in his report, in which he not only rejects the plan as a whole, but in all its



But as to Niebuhr's final resolution, Stein might have acted differently without blame. Niebuhr did not see his way through the difficulties that beset him, and, resigning his political hopes, withdrew to literary life with that safe conscience with which he descended to his grave. His conduct on this critical occasion is, in fact, the most striking proof that he maintained then as throughout life, even in the most difficult positions, those principles,

details from beginning to end; and moreover, in many instances, with very bitter and spiteful remarks. I next requested him to draw up a plan of his own, which I would willingly adopt if it were better. To this he replied that he was not in a position to do so; and, besides, it would be of no avail, unless he had the supreme and exclusive charge of carrying it into execution: that means, unless he were Minister of Finance. I have written to him repeatedly to say that, in the first place, it was necessary that some plan should be proposed, tested, and adopted; that it was his most sacred duty to express all his ideas on this subject; but I have as yet received no answer. I really do not consider myself infallible; I beg for advice; I am willing to listen to every opinion; but neither do I consider the Privy Councillor Niebuhr infallible, and should not if he were ten times as learned as he is. I only care for the Right and the Truth. I send you my plan, his report, and the whole correspondence between myself and Niebuhr. In the report you will find marginal numbers to which I have written remarks; but I do not give them with it, that you may be perfectly free and unprejudiced in forming your judgment on it."

After this, Hardenberg repeated his summons to Niebuhr to declare himself definitively on the points in dispute, and the latter his refusal to do so, adding even, that he was "all the more resolved not to communicate anything as mere material for discussion, because it was positively wrong to reveal *excellent means*, so long as they might be used in connection with *perverted measures*, and thus promote the ruin of the country."

Even after this, Hardenberg wrote once more to Niebuhr, on the 4th July, 1810, as follows: "You have answered me as to your expressions concerning my finance plan, and given some explanations, to which you have added certain principles according to which you would be able to draw up a plan of finance, if it be first decided that we wish to find a third course, between *all* and *nothing*. I cannot help writing to you once more on this subject, and wish most earnestly that our views could be brought to harmonise. If I understand you rightly, you do not choose to draw up any plan that is merely to serve as a basis for discussion; you do not feel that you could do it, unless

which he advocated in his writings and which he preached to those of the younger generation who had the happiness to approach him. He suffered the penalty of a statesman who, having outgrown the dimensions of his party, was attacked on both sides, and misunderstood even by many of his friends. Niebuhr, however, belongs neither to his family and friends, nor to Prussia alone, but to Europe and the whole of the civilized world, and his character, not less than his learning and historical genius will stand the test of ages.

This, my dear Miss Winkworth, is what appears to me now sufficient to say in answer to your kind demand. I am glad to have thus had an opportunity of

you were yourself made responsible for your propositions, and superintended their execution? But does your objection extend also to a verbal discussion with me? It appears so, and I confess it is not what I should have expected, considering our relative position in the King's service, or the intimacy and friendly feeling between us, which I flattered myself with the hope of strengthening. The question, whether we wish to seek a third course between *all* or *nothing*, needs no preliminary decision. We wish that which is the *best*, that which can *save* us; and on this point, I should have thought, you could have felt no scruple in giving me a *full* explanation of your views,—entering into a full discussion with me. You cannot meet me with the assertion that you do not possess the necessary data for drawing up a consistent and connected plan of finance in accordance with your convictions, for you would be able in a moment to procure any that you might require. Certainly, in working it out, you would have to put yourself in the place of him who would be entrusted with its responsibility and execution,—that is, in mine. I by no means believe myself infallible, and you really mistake me much if you do not give me credit for the disposition to weigh your ideas most carefully. On this account I must again and most earnestly entreat you to sketch such a plan as I have referred to, setting down in figures the deductions you draw from the principles on which you found it, and then to discuss it with me, point by point. I cannot believe that you will refuse to accede to this request, as it will not be at all a difficult task for you to put together the ideas which are the result of your information and your reflection; and your heart is a guarantee to me that you will take the liveliest interest in contributing to the salvation of the State."

disclosing some facts before the last witnesses descend to the grave. I appeal for the accuracy of those facts to all those who either in Rome or in Germany knew him ; and as regards the crisis of 1810, to the documents still in existence and to the testimony of the only surviving hero of that glorious age,—Schön, the friend both of Stein and Niebuhr.

I remain,

My dear Miss Winkworth,

Yours faithfully,

BUNSEN.

EXTRACTS FROM  
NIEBUHR'S LETTERS TO CHEVALIER BUNSEN,  
AFTER HIS  
DEPARTURE FROM ROME IN THE SPRING OF 1823.

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NAPLES, *April 8th*, 1823.

. . . . . It appears that new proscriptions are beginning, and that *lettres d'exil* have come from Vienna. An officer has been ordered to leave the country, without even having been brought to any trial. . . . .

*April 25th*, 1823.

It seems quite fully proved that the Cortes have no root in the country. This certainly does not settle the matter; and, since the true solution of the problem might perchance surpass human powers, they will probably give themselves very little trouble about it, and regard the proclamation of Reynieto as the simplest settlement! . . . .

BOON, *September 12th*, 1823.

I feel myself as foreign in Germany as I unhappily foresaw that I should. Here, fortunately for me, political follies and clamours do not reach my ears. As a mere sojourner, I have no intercourse with the natives, strictly speaking; and thus I escape the outcry against the pardon

granted to Fonk,\*—an outcry which, I am sorry to say, is not without ground, as far as the form is concerned. But, altogether, by no means so crude a spirit appears to prevail here as in Swabia and on the central Rhine, especially so far as the empire of the *Neckarzeitung* extends; and this makes it quite clear that the exclusion of seditious newspapers is by no means so ineffectual as the liberals are wont to maintain. In reality, people's feelings are become blunted about everything, and they are weary; so that the anxiety still constantly expressed by the authorities can scarcely be honest. In truth, nothing has any stimulus for the palate of the public—except, indeed, in Swabia, that one most impudent journal. But in Wurtemberg there was a secret fear that they should not be much longer able to preserve this boon. . . .

There is, however, a more consolatory topic;—that the prosperity of Germany is by no means so shattered as we might be led to believe by the reports of the Leipsic fair, and articles in a similar tone in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. Here, on the Lower Rhine, it is evident that even the agriculturists are not ruined by the fall of prices, as is said to be the case in Holstein, &c., and is visibly the case in Swabia. From Schaffhausen to Heilbronn inclusive, you see a land visibly in a state of decline; and the aspect of things is bad in Darmstadt and the neighbourhood. The manufacturers here, seem increasingly able to compete with those of foreign countries. The woollen, iron, and leather manufacturers are certainly able to maintain their ground. The evil is everywhere—our over-production. The population is everywhere increasing at a frightful rate. On the Middle and Lower Rhine you see many new dwellings rising up; while in

\* This alludes to a celebrated criminal case of that time, a man of apparent respectability, who had been accused of wilful and deliberate murder, under very extraordinary circumstances, at Aix-la-Chapelle. The jury found him guilty; the King had the case sifted by the highest judicial authorities of the realm, and, on the proposition of the Minister of Justice, quashed the verdict, Public opinion was very much divided upon the internal merits of the case, but pronounced itself decidedly adverse to the violation of the form.

Switzerland and in Swabia, as far as I could see, no building at all was going on,—at all events, none worth speaking of. The mournful side of the question is—the want of dignity in the Governments, the frivolity of the so-called educated classes, and the deep intellectual decline. You may search far and wide before you will find any one who has really reflected for himself, and not drawn his opinions from the puddles by the road-side. . . . With regard to the Provincial Charters, I think, on the whole, as you do.\* The Government is clearly animated by honest, good intentions; and the elements are there, from which really excellent institutions may develop themselves. As to the qualifications for proprietors of fiefs-noble,† I constantly return to my old position,—that not every such proprietor ought to be eligible; but that the provincial nobility ought to be constituted by two factors—the proprietorship of a fief-noble and personal noble qualifications. In a similar way, we must restore a permanent peasant order, such as existed before the late changes—if, that is, we wish to have real stability. . . .

Bonn, *January 18th*, 1824.

I can well understand that the impatient eagerness of the priests to abuse the advantages of their position must cause you great annoyance, having absolutely no support from the home authorities. The Courts are now in an awkward position, and yet will scarcely attain to the (after all, fruitless) perception how much has been lost by their carelessness. The Catholic clergy is becoming every day animated by a worse spirit. In this diocese [Cologne!], for

\* This is in answer to some remarks I had made upon the Provincial Charters granted in the early part of 1823 to the eight provinces of the monarchy, Brandenburg, Pomerania, Saxony, Prussia, Silesia, Posen, Westphalia, and the Rhenish provinces. These Charters established Provincial Chambers.

† Literally, knightly proprietors. See *note* to vol. ii. p. 303.

‡ The diocese in which M. Fonke was at that time Vicar-General for Aix-la-Chapelle.

instance, Fonke is openly labouring to obtain an ignorant, utterly bigoted clergy, and even since the exclusion of Professor Gratz,\* he boldly persists in making war upon the Catholic faculty here, by a positive persecution of those who have studied in our University.

The number of the bigots among the educated, whether Jacobinical or absolutists in politics, is certainly very small; indeed, it does not seem as if external observances had come into fashion again among the liberals of Germany or in France; but the populace is again becoming barbarously bigoted. I give the fanatics in France credit for a similar intention to work this for their own ends, as I do the liberals with regard to the opposite extreme. . . . Catholicism only maintains its ground through the absolute indifference of the upper classes towards real religion: it would disappear from the earth, if people had now the spiritual wants of the sixteenth century.

Liberalism would have nearly lost its footing in Germany, if it were not for the vacuum in men's minds, and the necessity of hating something. The Chambers of the smaller States seem to have lost almost all their credit; for the people see distinctly enough, in Darmstadt for instance, that they are as badly off as ever, in spite of them. Really sound ideas, however, do not thereby gain much influence; for, in the long run, people will submit willingly to nothing but a bureaucracy, governing according to liberal principles of the latest fashion. . . .

Bonn, 9th Sept., 1824.

De Serre's death is an irreparable loss to me; it is like that of a brother. God grant that the widow may get home in safety with her children; to travel at this time of year through the Campagna, with young children! I have written

\* Gratz was professor in the Roman Catholic Faculty of Divinity, a learned man, and of irreproachable life, but whom the Government was constitutionally obliged to remove, because the archbishop had declared that his book on the origin of the Gospel of Matthew was not orthodox.

to meet her in Paris, to say that I should like to write the life of the great man, if she could procure me the materials for some of the epochs, and would trust them to me.

I am certainly very angry with Villèle, on account of his behaviour towards my friend; but I should have defended the law respecting the consolidated debt on the same principles as he did. Whether it gave too great advantages to the bankers, would have depended on whether the operation could have been carried out more slowly, without paralysing the state too long with regard to politics. The real mistake was in not creating more stock at a lower rate of interest. In the necessary choice between two evils, the increase of the capital of the debt would have been by far the smaller. Posterity would have had to take their share, if the floating debt of 1823 had been funded;\* and if the new plan had not been brought forward till now, the operation might have been managed much more advantageously. I have now communicated a detailed plan to Pasquiers; for I am still unable quite to withdraw myself from politics. . . . That, of late years, the associations among the young men have assumed something of the character of a conspiracy, and have extended beyond the bounds of the universities among men of riper years, it seems, I am sorry to say, impossible to doubt. In this province, we only hear confused reports; still, the complicity of the commander of the garrison at Erfurt in these criminal absurdities seems to be attested by persons who could scarcely be mistaken in the result of the investigations. In this shape, we see a connection with the heads of insurrection in France, whose instruments the unfortunate and misguided fools have been. There cannot be anything in the world more loathsome than the idolatry of the German youth for—Napoleon! . . . .

\* Niebuhr had from the beginning been in favour of a Three per Cent. Stock, either for the whole or for part of the debt.



BERLIN, *January 23rd*, 1825.

. . . . . As to your being sent on a special mission to Greece, there is, to all appearances, no chance of it. I shall be only too glad if the Cabinets do not at last unite to put down the Greeks by force. In order that so-called Christianity may remain a stranger to these horrors, unhappy Greece will probably have to submit to the Turks, and be sold to them by the robber chieftains. On the other hand, you might probably obtain a mission to Barbary. I have been called hither to sustain an arduous struggle with the swindlers, sharpers, and jugglers who want to introduce a paper currency. Its issue is extremely doubtful, indeed success is scarcely probable. In this case, I shall withdraw entirely from public affairs. . . . .

BONN, *August 4th*, 1827.

Since, rather more than two years ago, I came to the resolution, which I immediately put in practice, of renouncing the world and its delusions, and of returning, late indeed but not quite too late, to the vocation from which I had been seduced in my youth by those who had to dispose of my life, though I never forgot that Providence had indicated it as my vocation ;—since then, I think, my dearest friend, that I have never addressed one letter to you. I do not know ; it may, perhaps, not be so long since I wrote to you ; for the causes that have withheld me from all correspondence, have also swept from my recollection what few letters I have written. At all events, it is but too certain that you have received nothing from me since I began the re-modelling of the first volume of my History. Now, in the first place, have you received the book ? . . . . I think, however, that when you hear and see all that I have read and written during this time, you will find it very conceivable that I should have got quite overwhelmed with my studies, and that my health should have been shattered by my exertions, as has been the case since the spring, with but poor prospects of improvement. . . . .

You would not know Germany again. Instead of the heaving billows which the storm had left on the face of the ocean, when you and I crossed the Alps eleven years ago, a perfect calm now reigns; the follies and illusions which, when we first returned to Germany, still haunted the earth from time to time like spectres, have now vanished, but with them have vanished every aspiration, everything ideal. We are living in an extremely quiet common-place reality; which is after all very comfortable, but trivial and selfish. There are intrigues and cabals without end: the higher classes are bent on much that is not praiseworthy; the priests are animated by a bad spirit; liberalism is quite out of joint and only vulgar. The Governments have neglected all the points of which they ought to have taken advantage; and, with the total derangement of the finances, and the daily diminishing susceptibility to spiritual impulses (which is very welcome to those in power), our prospects for the future are dreadful. It is our monarchy that will have the greatest difficulties to cope with, and is the most mournfully curtailed in life and soul; for what political life could Saxony and others have? It is, indeed, a period of calm, such as there was before the Revolution; but the events of the world barely stir a few individuals; scarcely one in a million is roused from his sleep by them; no one cherishes hopes,—no one builds castles in the air. It was very different then; and if people now take as lively an interest in their local affairs as they did forty years ago, build houses and gardens, lay up for their children and for their own old age,—the spice is wanting which then kept the soul fresh.

Some rumour has probably reached you across the Alps, of the change of principles by which the old maxims that had been regarded, ever since 1807, as defunct—discarded—have now got the upper hand again; but you will scarcely imagine the degree and extent to which this is true. The received criterion of sentiments sufficiently anti-revolutionary to justify confidence, is the adoption (in coarse imitation of the French *Right*) of the principle, that all the deviations from the old maxims, which have taken place since 1806, are to

Villèle by a coalition with the left, and had undermined that of Martignac by the municipal law, had previously, in like manner, carried the entire freedom of the press from control by censorship, and the law relating to the mode of introducing amendments, in order to attain their own ends. I called down a curse upon the infamous party of the priests and Jesuits, and then turned to consider the renewed perils opening before Germany, and conjured all Germans to be at one,—to close up all schisms and divisions, instead of widening them,—to stand up for our existing institutions with their infinite blessings; and proclaimed a “Get thee behind me, Satan!” to all who seek to stir up the Catholics against the Protestants, and to feed the flame of grudge and ill-will against that State which is the main prop of Germany. My remarks were directed against proceedings which have taken place here;—taken place without a reprimand, because the coalition of the Jesuits and Jacobins has such powerful influence, that in our hitherto harmless Catholic theological faculty, a man has been appointed by the Mayence [Ultramontane] party, who might satisfy the most furious Belgians.

This party rules, not alone through W—— and S——, who keeps Altenstein in leading-strings, but also through the insane aristocrats at Berlin; nay, even through at least a part of the Pietists of high rank belonging to the faction of the *Kirchenzeitung*; especially the two Messrs. von ——, of whom the one at C—— has quite abandoned himself to the Belgicising aristocratic “Members of the Congregation.” Still an artificial Pietist feels a profound respect for a Jesuit; he feels that in his own way the latter is more than he; and plays into the hands of this faction with all his might. I cannot conceal from myself that efforts are making to blacken me in Berlin by these animals (the coalition of both races of animals), and however great a misfortune it may be to me in other respects, not to have made the express declaration that it was my wish to go to Berlin, these things would have made my life there a martyrdom, as regards my personal relations. . . .

The chaotic state in which we are in Germany is, beyond description, mournful. The insolence of the French is enough to drive us to despair; but that of the English,—their ill-will, their contempt for us Germans is enough to drive one mad! You have, I suppose, seen the review of my “History” in the “Edinburgh.” The *Courier* says, that the French army numbers one hundred veteran Generals, with whom Diebitsch is not to be compared; the *Globe* and *Traveller* of yesterday reckon us among the “half-barbarous” nations—while England in every respect is declining morally and intellectually! One could be tempted to wish them the chastisement of a revolution, if there were a refuge to be found anywhere from the alliance of the tiger and the alligator!



**LETTERS FROM HOLLAND,**

**IN 1808 AND 1809.**

**VOL. III.**

**B**



# MEMOIR OF NIEBUHR.

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## LETTERS FROM HOLLAND.

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*Extracts from the Circular Letters from Holland,  
1808 and 1809.\**

SUHLINGEN, February 29th, 1808.

DURING our reunion in Holland, I formed the resolution of writing to you a continuous narrative of the journey we have now begun; for I felt that the attempt to bring the past to mind by means of verbal narration is unavailing, and even if partially successful, it does not, to friends at a distance, fill up the chasms arising from their ignorance of nearly all the personal circumstances and little events of daily life, in which we live and move as in an atmosphere, and by which our individual existence is modified. . . .

AMSTERDAM, March 11th, 1808.

Since my last letter I have been paying calls,—seen the greater part of the town, and am already able to find my way about pretty well; but Amelia has still remained almost constantly in the house. The dinner to-day at Mr. Hope's

\* The letters from which the following extracts are taken, are those which Niebuhr wrote during his stay in Holland, to be sent, as circulars, to all his relatives in Holstein, and to which reference is made, vol. i., p. 230.



was one result of my calls and letters of introduction, and the invitation to-night to Madame C.'s, another. If it be true, as several persons have assured us from their own experience, that after you have been here a short time, you have to drive from one party to another without interruption, I am beginning to despair at the very prospect, and thank Heaven that a wise presentiment prevented me from bringing any beyond the most indispensable letters of introduction; else we should only have fallen out of the frying-pan into the fire in coming here from Hamburgh, since the fashionable society here must inevitably be much less interesting and more tedious to us. But I, with whose whole nature this mode of life harmonises so little, quite grieve to see one day and season after another of the youthful years, that can never be recalled, thus frittered away. The first somewhat unfavourable impression, which the interior of Amsterdam made upon us, was merely accidental, because our way from the Muyden Gate led through the Jews' quarter. Here, as everywhere, they live very thickly crowded together, though not, as in Poland, five families in one room; and as their number amounts to 20,000, or the tenth part of the whole population, it is no wonder that the streets seemed to us crowded, and by the most miserable rabble. In the rest of the city this is by no means the case. How shall I describe the city to you without a map of it? As you know, it is a half-circle, of which the harbour forms the chord. Almost exactly the centre of this semicircle is occupied by the old town, which surrounds the banks of the arm of the Amstel, and is scarcely larger than the proper Old Town of Hamburgh may have been at the end of the sixteenth century. Around this, in concentric lines from south to north, lie the great *Grachten*. These are canals, with a row of splendid houses on each bank, or immense streets with a canal running down the middle, and are certainly extremely imposing: the view of them must have been grand indeed, when these canals, now so lifeless, swarmed with boats. The most novel sight to us was where two canals cross at right angles, and you pass

across both by three bridges, forming three sides of a square. A great number of the 210 bridges, that unite the artificial islands, into which the peat-moss forming the foundation of Amsterdam has been cut, are really magnificent. As in London, few among the large houses can be called positively handsome. The real grandeur of the architecture of Amsterdam is concealed underground, and consists in the innumerable piles which form its basis; a work of which you may have some idea from the fact that the foundation of M. Van Brienen's house cost 100,000 florins before a stone was visible above the earth. Thus, the Stadthaus rests upon 14,000 piles. This building, the pride of Holland, the palace of the free city of Amsterdam during the seventeenth century, the erection and decoration of which cost thirty millions of florins, has just been chosen for the king's palace, and the workmen are busily engaged in fitting up the interior for his use. It is an unfortunate circumstance for a foreign traveller, since it renders a masterpiece of modern architecture quite inaccessible at present, as well as a unique gallery containing numberless masterpieces of the Flemish school, which it has been necessary to remove on account of the works going on. The pictures are now dispersed in various directions, and can hardly, in their present scattered state, be shown to strangers. I shall not however fail to see them for want of effort, and shall perhaps partially succeed, as one of my principal correspondents, who is however absent just now for a few days, is a member of the magistracy. In extent, the Stadthaus is inferior to Christiansburg, but its apparent proportions are much finer. I have, so far, been obliged to content myself with walking round it and looking at it on all sides. Two magnificent alto-relievos on the entablature, somewhat overladen, but still beautiful and striking, will often attract my eyes. The Exchange of Amsterdam, a venerable name to everyone acquainted with commerce, has not equalled my expectations, either in itself, or in the throng which I anticipated; it must be remembered, however, that commerce is quite at a standstill at present, and the number of foreign merchants, who

formerly repaired here almost by thousands, and increased the crowd on the Exchange, must now be very inconsiderable. A very ugly disfigurement of the houses, which is avoided in London by the union of the flues into one narrow and very long chimney, is occasioned by the numerous bent arms of chimneys rising above the roofs. I paid my call at the house of Hope the first day after my arrival; have repeated it, and went to dine yesterday with Mr. W. H., as I shall to-morrow with Mr. Labouchere. The former is a man not yet fifty, but looking much older than his years through gout and debility, whose ill-health probably renders him peculiarly irritable. The latter is one of the cleverest men I ever met with, but not one who exerts himself to put a stranger at his ease. Meanwhile, one who has sufficient self-respect not to allow himself to be overborne by the combined force of his pride in wealth, which confers despotic power, and in the intellect which wields this power with the utmost energy and skill—a pride which is aggravated by an unbounded contempt of mankind, both of individuals and governments, amounting to affectation,—may always find pleasure in making the acquaintance of a man gifted with this order of genius, if, as is certainly the case with Mr. Labouchere, he stands apart from the ordinary type of mankind, and may afford a subject of study. Mr. B. is very gentlemanly and intelligent, and I fancy these qualities are not rare among the mercantile class here. I became acquainted, by sitting next him at Mr. Hope's, with one excessively purse-proud merchant, —, who related to me, among other things, how, for want of a passport from Paris, he had not been able to enter Bruges, though he had some thousands of florins there. Such originals amuse for once in a way. This man took me for a Frenchman, which has happened to me before in a provincial town, but could hardly occur in France itself. Our supper-party yesterday was desperately dull, *comme de raison*. Our hostess could not be made to comprehend that I did not play, and said with a *naïveté*, which certainly you would not hear in the great world, "*Mais, monsieur, comment est-il possible que*

*vous ne jouez pas ?* " . . . . I cannot find the Dutch women beautiful. Amelia was struck by their comical attitudes as they cowered over the *chauffe-pieds* and hot hearths, which I did not notice, as I was not in the ladies' circle. We did not get home till one o'clock. We spent a very different evening on Wednesday at the Dutch Theatre, where we saw "Athalie," capitally translated, and, believe it or not as you will, excellently acted. This drama is so grand and pure that I can see it without self-reproach, as well as Shakspeare's tragedies, which I understand are extremely well given here. . . . .

AMSTERDAM, March 22nd, 1808.

. . . . . Amsterdam does not lie in a marsh, but only in a drained peat-moss, and I am gradually making out, to my great astonishment, that the province of Holland, strictly so called, is composed of peat-mosses with scarcely any marsh land; the word "marsh," even, is foreign to the Dutch language, and is not understood here. And these peat-mosses, according to all appearances, are of a very bad kind; though they have been brought under cultivation by immense industry, they are only fit for pasture, and you do not see a bit of arable land here far and wide. I doubt if the husbandman has a single plough on his farm. The wall of the city is very low, not more than from eight to ten feet high, and, therefore in reality, a mere apology for a wall; still, it must have been regarded more seriously in former times, for all the gardens laid out on the bastions are quite new. The summer-houses round the city are not remarkable in any way; still they are pleasing, because everything is kept in such good condition, quite a contrast to the broken palings and untidy aspect of the gardens around Copenhagen, which used to be such an eyesore to me. I almost repent of having written this; how much would we not all give to have those places even in their old state once more, though we ourselves were never to see them again! My way led me through the Jews' quarter. Its inhabitants belong to the poorest, most

ragged, and disgusting class of this unhappy nation. Their poverty and their in-born love of dirt carry on a constant warfare with the cleanliness of the Dutch police-regulations, in which neither side is completely victorious. Meanwhile, you see filth, sweepings, &c., lying in their alleys, and are reminded by your nose when you enter their main street. You will believe that I had no curiosity to visit their side lanes. Their synagogues; however, are by far the most splendid I have seen anywhere, particularly that of the Portuguese community, which is said to be built after the plan of the Temple, and has a wide entrance-court. . . . There are also an Armenian and a genuine Greek Church here, both with diminutive congregations, the services of which I should like to attend, if it be permitted. . . .

My business here brings me more particularly into connection with the firm of De Smeth, but also with the Hopes, though they have intentionally placed themselves rather in the background. The Messrs. De Smeth and Van der Poll, who are knights (*Van de Unie*), are extremely obliging, friendly men, with whom it is easy to be on good terms, and who seem to be very well inclined towards me. Many of the great merchants of this city have been knighted, and, what is better, made real Councillors of State to the king on matters of commerce and finance, concerning which the king appears to listen to them with great attention, and sincere desire for the welfare of his people. The Messrs. Hope are not knights, to make the contrast the more striking. M. Van der Poll has introduced me to the *Musæum*, a sort of club where political and literary newspapers and periodicals are read; it is richly provided with them in all languages, and the most exemplary silence and order reign in the place. On the other hand, many sit with their heads covered, and smoking is carried on to such an extent that the room reeks with the fumes. I did not get home till two o'clock this morning from a supper at Mr. Hope's. You know that if the Amsterdam merchants of the first class are to be compared to kings, and those of the second to princes, the house of Hope, which leaves all the rest far behind it, and whose immense wealth

is estimated altogether at about forty millions of florins, will take the rank of an emperor in the mercantile world. . . . At this party, one thing afforded me much amusement. Here it is never imagined that any human being, having claims to the title, does not gamble; it is therefore a rule in Amsterdam, that the number of persons at an evening party should, subtracting seven, be divisible by four into the intended number of parties for cards. These seven are destined for *bouillotte*. Now, Amelia remained at home, and I did not play. This deranged the whole plan of those who had grouped together for this interesting amusement, and they were forced to play with only five. What a malicious pleasure I enjoyed in watching the vexation of one and another at this spoiling of the only interesting hour of their day; above all, the excessively supercilious contempt with which a *petite maitresse* regarded me for my awkwardness and want of education! I enjoyed it so much that it made the evening quite endurable. In the same way I enjoyed the really indescribable littleness of a young Parisian dandy, whom that lady admired as much as she despised me; and blessed the conscription which is driving such *canaille* by thousands against the balls and the bayonets. To such creatures a prince might say with justice,—not as was once horribly said to the noble Guards, “Do you want to live for ever, you dogs?” but,—“Why do you want to live, you dogs, when death is the only respectable moment of your lives?” A Huron, (I am not ashamed to confess that I think of this novel of Voltaire’s with pleasure; moreover, there are many more flowers than nettles and poisonous plants in it, still, the ignorant and incautious who are afraid of the latter had better leave it alone); that Huron would have said of Amsterdam, “They invite a stranger, under pain of considering themselves highly insulted, to spend his evening after nine o’clock in utter idleness, and to undergo a headache, if night-watching does not agree with him. They also impose it on him, as a duty, either to lose his money or his temper at play. This is one of the refinements by which intellectual culture has been brought to its well-known high perfection in Europe.”

AMSTERDAM, *March 30th*, 1808.

. . . . . The Marine School is an excellent institution, which was established after the American war, when great losses compelled Holland to turn her attention to the decay of her marine; and the altered position of commerce made her alive to the necessity of protecting her merchant navy, no longer able to defy competition, by a watchful care over the education of her sailors. It was founded principally under the auspices of M. Titsingh (whom I saw at Mr. Marsden's) and the late Mr. Hope, and is entirely a private institution, erected and supported by subscriptions, and not a cadet school, but intended immediately for practical navigation. Here, spirited boys are received without reference to their ability to pay, and are instructed in the essential branches of education, in pilotage, in the practical working of ships, and in the service of naval artillery. They are trained in hardy habits; their dormitory is a large loft, like the between-decks of a man-of-war, with open windows in the form of port-holes, and hammocks instead of beds. The number of these proved, however, that the forty or fifty pupils now in the institution are only a fourth part of the number originally contemplated. They also mess together on ships' provisions, and this mode of life agrees very well with them, for health sparkles in their eyes, and laughs on their firm brown cheeks. They are extremely well-mannered, merry, and modest, which cadets would hardly be if they had to show strangers about without the oversight of a strict master. But how can it be otherwise? Here these boys are brought up to a laborious occupation, yielding scanty earnings (for a Dutch sailor only receives 600 florins, and often less, as his regular pay), and, only on condition of extraordinary good conduct, leading to a pension in old age. Their sole advantage over other sailor boys is, that they are better, and I believe, for their class, highly educated—a result towards which they are urged in every way. But the cadets are brought up to enter, when once their examination is happily over, an armed guild distinguished by its self-

conceit; and the self-conceit and arrogance of their class, which are kept under control in its elder members by hardships and suffering, or prudence, or a mature understanding, are the first acquisition which these neophytes receive from the order to which they are admitted. Have the cadet-schools ever produced any great admiral? I know of none, and should have asked whether they had any great general to point to, had not the example of the Emperor Napoleon occurred to me. He is an exception; but as a rule it may be maintained that, though such institutions may train a much larger number of moderately serviceable soldiers than could be otherwise procured without a long war, they generally exclude or injure, on the other hand, any real genius. In the court of the institution, on dry ground, there is a brig with all its rigging complete, presented by Mr. Hope, on which the pupils (in Dutch, the *kweeklinge*, the whole institution is called the *kweek-school*) learn to handle the ropes before they practise in the harbour. They are also taught to make models: we were shown a beautiful model of a 64-gun ship, made entirely by two of the pupils. This is notoriously a favourite occupation with sea-faring men, who live with their whole hearts in their manly calling, and think nothing in the world more beautiful than a ship. This is the practical and a very interesting side of the institution; but it also possesses in two of its halls a treasure of naval relics and paintings. Nowhere are there finer portraits than in Holland. De Ruyter, the two Van Tromps, Piet Hein, Van der Zaan, the younger De Witt are here, all masterly pictures. The best of them is one which must really excite admiration for the Flemish school even in the warmest partisans of the Italian ideal: it is a large painting representing Willem van der Zaan with his young wife on his arm. It is full of life and dignity. The hero (who, after many victorious expeditions, was shot in a skirmish with Algerine corsairs; the fatal ball is preserved among the relics and trophies presented by his grand-daughter along with this picture, and a donation of 10,000 florins to the Marine School), is looking with a countenance full of purity,



yet of pride, on his fair young wife, who hangs timidly on his arm, as if she felt it too great an honour to appear in public as the wife of such a man ; while he is no less proud of the beautiful woman, whom his deeds and his fame have won, than because he feels himself worthy of her beauty. It is a picture from which you cannot get away. Another excellent painting, and no doubt a speaking likeness, is the heroic form of De Ruyter, incontestably the greatest seaman that ever lived, and whose republican and private virtues were equal to his greatness in war. The two Van Tromps were nothing more than great naval generals, especially the saviour of Copenhagen, whom, as such, I contemplated with gratitude, but for the rest, he was a very bad citizen, who forsook De Ruyter in the great battle, and feasted his eyes on the murder of the greatest men whom the Netherlands have produced, the De Witts. Piet Hein was in reality a mere corsair, and his portrait expresses nothing more ; but he has an extremely droll expression of inward satisfaction, as if he were chuckling to himself over the capture of the Spanish silver fleet. There are also some historical naval pieces here, the attacks upon Chatham, Cadiz, &c., which are modern, and not worth much as works of art, as indeed the nature of their subjects scarcely permitted, particularly in the former, where the attack was made along a line stretching so far along the river, that the picture becomes little more than a map. A subject of this kind is only fit for a panorama, and it is little to the credit of the Dutch that they have not taken advantage of it for the purpose. The effect would be the more original, as an old drawing of one of Van der Zaan's battles shows that, at that period, the men-of-war were built and rigged very differently from the fashion of the present day : the hull was much higher in proportion to its length.

The two principal churches of Amsterdam, the Old and the New Church, contain the tombs of the greatest naval heroes of the Republic. We have only as yet seen the New Church, which certainly has not much right to its title, since its founder, the Lord of Purmereede, who is buried within

its walls, died in 1417. But Amsterdam originally consisted of two towns on the two banks of the Amstel, of which the southern was called the old and the northern the new side, and of the latter this was the parish church. . . . It was once a beautiful gothic structure, but it has been so disfigured by additions, that all exterior symmetry has been quite destroyed, and you can barely recognise the form of the cross. Houses even have been built up against it, so that it is almost hidden like the ruins of Nismes and Verona. Here is De Ruyter's mausoleum, a group in the old German style. The dead hero lies in armour, like the old kings and knights on their tomb-stones, his left hand resting on his mortal wound: this part of the monument is impressive from being a portrait; the allegorical figures—two colossal Tritons who are blowing abroad his fame on shells and the rest in the same taste—are odious; and the climate of Amsterdam is so injurious to marble, that the statues, though placed in the choir of the church, have suffered more than if they had stood a thousand years in the open air of Italy. Far more beautiful and touching is the Latin inscription, which expresses in a few noble words the spirit of his deeds; it closes grandly with these three words, forming a line of large golden letters on the black marble: *Immensi tremor oceani*,—"Before him trembled the boundless ocean." De Ruyter was born in Flushing, I think the son of a fisherman; he served upwards from the post of a common sailor, was acknowledged to be the first naval hero of Europe, and was made a noble of their kingdoms by three kings, and by Spain, a duke of the kingdom of Naples. Nelson received the same distinction, but the republican De Ruyter never made use of his empty title but when courtesy demanded it. He was the idol of his nation, worshipped as perhaps no one else ever was, except the elder Scipio after his triumph; yet he was devoid of all political ambition, and his character was so pure that none of his political enemies have ever ventured to raise an accusation against him. He was gentle and humane. I have always revered him as one of the noblest and most

ideal men of modern history; and you will imagine, therefore, that it is no slight thing to me to have stood by his grave. His whole family rest beside him. There are two very insignificant Latin poems on it,—I conjecture by Barläus, as he was usually the author of the numerous versified inscriptions of that time which are to be found in this building, but which ought not to stand in such a spot.

Farther back in the church is the monument of Admiral Van Galen, who beat the English at Leghorn in the war with Cromwell, and fell in the victory. He, too, lies like a knight on his tomb,—he has a gentle countenance. In the choir, not far from De Ruyter, lies a Bentinck who fell in the battle of Doggersbank. But how had the taste for art fallen with the national greatness! His monument is a likeness *en medaillon*, with a *queue*, surrounded by blue and white flags in plaster of Paris, literally representing the Dutch flag! A similar monstrosity in art, is a portrait of the brave Admiral Zoutmann, who commanded in that indecisive engagement. The picture hangs in the Marine School, and is so poor, so *fade*, that even a foreigner is ashamed to see such speaking testimonies to the former glories, and the present decline of Holland, side by side. Art is indeed extinct here; I shall speak another time of the efforts now making to revive it, but they will hardly do more than produce copies. I have just seen to-day some performances of this kind; they cannot be called bad, but they are dead, languid, and never grow more life-like, however long you may stare at them. I cannot but wonder that these men are not ashamed to hang up such things, when there are still so many masterpieces in existence. In the same church there also rest Drost Hooft, the historian, and admirable translator of Tacitus, and the great poet Vondel; the monument of the latter is very simple, and was not erected till a century after his death. . . . .

AMSTERDAM, *April 2nd*, 1808.

. . . . . The day before yesterday, we went to see the building belonging to the celebrated society, Felix Meritis. Its name is no doubt already familiar to you from the prize questions it has often propounded. This society, founded in 1787, by forty members, now numbers five hundred, each of whom contributes yearly sixty florins. Its object is to diffuse a knowledge of the physical sciences among the unlearned classes of respectable citizens; to extend a taste for literature, and to stimulate to literary attempts by conferring honours; to resuscitate the defunct art of Holland; to elucidate questions affecting commerce, industry, and agriculture; and lastly, to promote the cultivation of music. (It is remarkable enough that although a positive mania for concerts prevails here, this nation has not as yet produced a single composer.) The society is divided into five classes, corresponding to the objects I have named. In the class of physical science, complete courses of lectures are delivered, in which the celebrated Van Swieden, among others, takes part. Of course, none but members, and strangers introduced by them, can attend. This class is very well provided with apparatus, and has an observatory, which is, however, but poorly fitted up. The literary class admits authors, who are not members, to read their works before it; but it does not appear that lectures on history and similar subjects are delivered here, as in Paris. The class for Art has opened a school for drawing and painting, and formed a gallery of casts from the best antiques, which are a feast to the eyes, imperfect as casts always are, and many of these are complete failures. Still they give some idea of the Torso, the Capitoline Jupiter, &c., which are all to be found here, besides those to be seen in every school. We were much struck with the contrast between an antique Cupid bending his bow, and Canova's celebrated Amore. This work has given us a very low opinion of Canova; it is a patched, manufactured, insignificant thing—a beautiful boy, graceful enough, but nothing more. Its sculptor had no conception

of the god who sways gods and men, such as was in the mind of the ancient artist, when he gave the expression of careless wantonness and youthful exuberance of life. A Cupid standing still and upright without action—what an unlucky idea of Canova's! The honest, simple cast refuses to express all that is said to bribe the judgment in looking at his productions,—the smoothness and softness of the handling.

What we have seen of the paintings of this new school is not very encouraging. Prize after prize is conferred, yet the number of pupils is rather diminishing. Of the fifth class we saw only its shell, the most superb concert-hall. From the platform of the building, you overlook nearly the whole of the city, but it is not high enough for many of the streets to lie open before you. The view from the cupola of the Stadthaus must be much finer; but I have not yet got access to that. The rostra of the literary class, of carved mahogany, is a remarkable work of art; round its base run these wise words in large letters, *sapientia, ingenium, libertas*,—the true foundation indeed! But I must end my account for the present. Towards the end of next week, I am going to Utrecht to be presented to the king, which is necessary in any case. It will also interest me to make the acquaintance of some individuals who stand at the head of the administration, and are distinguishing themselves by very eminent improvements in its functions. The king is universally respected and beloved, as he deserves to be. He is most industrious; the message at the opening of the legislative body is entirely his own production, as well as the sketch of the very important paper on the finances, which has appeared in the journals. He has also learnt the vernacular language already, and interests himself warmly in all that concerns the country. . . . .

UTRECHT, April 8th, 1808.

. . . . . Since my last we have only been to see the Old Church [of Amsterdam]. It is loftier and more spacious than the New Church which I described to you lately, and

is, like that, concealed between houses; it contains monuments worth seeing, and some excellent painted windows. . . . A few at least of the splendid painted windows have here escaped the rage of the iconoclasts of the Reformation, who, in most of the towns in these provinces, as in Scotland, sedulously destroyed all the works of art to which their barbarism was blind. The Annunciation, the visit of Mary to Elizabeth, the Nativity, and the Adoration of the Magi fill two large windows, which were set up, judging by a date on one of them, about 1530, and this age is also indicated by the high style of art they display. According to the rules of antique painting, stained windows can only contain rows of figures one above another; this is a slight disadvantage to the eye, if one which affects only the thought is to be termed so, and it is far outweighed by the magic of the colours and the lights. The drawing of the figures in these windows is very superior to any other specimens of this art I have seen. In this respect, they much surpass another painted window in the same church, which is interesting from its subject. It is King Philip of Spain presenting to the deputies of Holland the Act by which he recognised their freedom and independence. The physiognomy of this mean-souled king is just what one should expect. The Dutch deputies approach him respectfully, but with their heads covered; one of them holds up the cap of liberty, a few Spanish nobles stand in the foreground with sullen countenances; these are probably portraits. But in this instance this branch of art has chosen a subject which lies beyond its sphere. The whole background must necessarily remain empty, because the very mildest colour which the glass will take is still too glaring and uniform for an historical painting; and thus all the figures seem to be floating in the air, and the picture has an unfinished look. Meanwhile, we cannot but approve rather than censure the attempt, even if not quite successful, to elevate the hearts of the people assembled for worship, by employing an art whose works may be injured by devastation but not by time, to remind them of their freedom. At present, this picture seems to call up few

associations in the minds of the people, and their eyes are chiefly attracted by a dog couched beside the king's guards, which is certainly admirably executed. The art of painting on glass is not quite extinct here, but it has much declined. The patrician families of Amsterdam (*i. e.* those who, though not legally privileged beyond the rest, continued in possession of the magistracy up to the time of the Revolution, because the municipal corporation always filled up its own vacancies), have set up their armorial bearings in several windows, and memorial panes for some who have been buried here have been occasionally added, up to within a very recent period. But the colours of these new portions are very faint. They still bury in the churches here, the floors of which consist almost entirely of grave-stones.

We have still many interesting objects to see. Among them are the undoubtedly excellent charitable institutions and houses of correction. All strangers see the *Werkhuis* because it is celebrated, and every well-recommended person obtains a ticket of admission from his banker. But that is a single institution, and you must see the many supported by charitable contributions and strict economy, to know the nation thoroughly from their truly honourable side. Our favourable opinion of the Dutch has not been weakened by further experience. When I have been here long enough to be able to speak without too much reliance on others, upon a subject where one is so liable to err, I will give myself the pleasure of writing to you about the national character. Here I cannot omit to tell you what struck us on our visit to the Old Church, where the servant of the sacristan, a girl with the happiest face you ever saw, showed us about, and there was an old stone-mason who entered into conversation with us. Nowhere have I seen such a universal expression of gentleness and quiet cheerfulness among the citizens and common people. It visibly proceeds from the inward sense of inviolable integrity, and a perfectly pure conscience. Our good Bentheimers had a similar expression. To these less public institutions, or to information respecting the details of the administration of the more celebrated ones, you can only

obtain access by means of acquaintances in the second and third-rate classes of society,—the last to whom travellers in general have access. A friend of this class whom I have made in Amsterdam said to me, very truly, “Our great men know as little of the nation as foreigners.” Now I have got two such acquaintances, who have both promised to introduce us to the recesses of Amsterdam. The first is one of the chief brokers on the Exchange, a class generally looked down upon by the great merchants, but who often know more than themselves about commerce. This is particularly the case with M. Saportas, who has a wide-spread celebrity in his own sphere,—the negotiation of treasury bonds. Before I came here I had wished to make his acquaintance, because I had good reason for expecting to derive much information from him, and although I had no letter to him myself, it so happened that I became acquainted with one of his friends, and was highly recommended to him by a foreigner whom I had never seen, but who knew of my mission here. I have found him not only possessed of the most accurate knowledge in his own sphere, but also, what was less to be expected, and what I had sought in vain elsewhere, a great amount of positive knowledge of the laws and institutions of the country, previous to the Revolution as well as since. My most intimate acquaintances are all Orangists; and one of them was president of the *Schöppenbank* when the French entered Amsterdam: hence I certainly did not expect much knowledge acquired from an interest in the new institutions among them, but perhaps an all the more accurate acquaintance with the old. This is, however, so far from being the case, that it really appears as if the certainly very complicated machinery of the old institutions, for which these estimable men risked everything, was scarcely known to them except by faith; with the exception, at most, of their own very narrow sphere, in which, however, each one seems only to have known his particular corner thoroughly. It is evident what an extraordinary advantage this gave to their adversaries. M. Saportas belongs, properly speaking, to the opponents of the old constitution, and is a decided adherent of the system of



unity, at the head of which stands the Minister of Finance, Gogel; a system which, since every sensible man must perceive that fate has given her irrevocable decree, may be discussed in cool blood, as we do, as a topic of the greatest interest to all countries, almost without exhausting yourself or the subject. But so much party spirit still survives here from the old times, though all have become good subjects, and all parties without distinction serve the king, as he on his side, gives appointments to all,—that people excommunicate each other, and refuse to associate on account of differences on this question. This is a very instructive acquaintanceship; I have, however, found another for my heart. A little while ago, I stumbled accidentally upon an old bookseller, or more properly an antiquarian (there are three hundred book-shops in Amsterdam). . . . whom Dehn had recommended to me as the person most qualified to get me a complete collection of documents bearing on the statistics and constitution of the country. This old man happened to be just then engaged in sorting a collection of engravings illustrating Dutch history; and he was so full of his new purchase, that he took us up at once into his sitting-room and showed us the collection which he had made himself and furnished with a catalogue, and which he declared he would not sell for any money. It was indeed a treasure. He not only possesses the portraits of all the Netherlanders who have been in any way celebrated, as statesmen, scholars, or artists, from the earliest periods up to the present time, but likewise all the historical and satirical prints that he has been able to hunt up. These last are very important for the spirit of the history of Holland, particularly during the seventeenth century, the period of her freedom and power. Nothing of importance happened without a print, good or bad, appearing on a great sheet, which was probably posted as a hand-bill, and the lower half of which contained verses, often by no means bad. He would willingly have shown us the whole, if it had been possible. We begged him to give us the history of the De Witts. From one subject we got to another, and I found he was just my man. The ephemeral constitutions

which have succeeded each other since 1795, till the introduction of royalty put an end to these antics, were the only subjects on which he gave me no help. He had not collected them, he said, but thrown them into his back shop as soon as they appeared. My interest in the history, the old laws, and the original literature of Holland delighted him greatly, particularly as such a taste is not only unheard of among foreigners, but is constantly on the decline among the natives. He has been to see us twice, and is as friendly with us as if he were our grandfather; to me he is moreover a real literary treasure and repertorium. He is not an Orangist; but the old constitution, as it was before the Revolution, is the object of his highest admiration and reverence. And, in fact, I believe that no country, all other things being equal, was ever so honestly governed, especially as regards the municipal institutions. I extremely enjoy a conversation with an old citizen like him, who properly belongs to the period, a century or a century and a half ago, particularly when I have been straining every sinew to keep up the conversation by artificial means with very polished men, who find equal difficulty on their side. . . . .

UTRECHT, *April 14th*, 1808.

. . . . . The most remarkable object in Utrecht is its very ancient Cathedral. Those who are versed in the history of the country no doubt know when it was erected; I can only fix its date in about the twelfth century, judging from its appearance. A church has existed here from the times of Dagobert, and a metropolitan cathedral from the time of Pepin and Boniface; and from this centre Christianity was diffused among the Frisians, as nearly all the Netherlanders were then called. But this colossal edifice cannot have been reared in those barbarous ages. O that it had been preserved entire! The greater part of it—the largest by far of the four parallelograms of which every ancient church is composed—has been destroyed, and there are only the foundations of its walls remaining, about twelve feet high.

. . . . . In the right transept there is a sarcophagus, which our guide told us was the tomb of the first bishop. This can hardly be true, whether St. Willibrod or St. Boniface be meant, or else the outer sarcophagus must have been left here, and only the inner coffin with the body have been carried to Echternach, or Fulda. Ancient, very ancient it certainly is, and may belong, perhaps, to the time of Charlemagne; it is of *pierre de touche*, and is of the primitive form, namely, the bishop lies in his robes, and with folded hands on the lid, and the sides are decorated with rough carving and images of saints; all the heads have been knocked off the latter, no doubt by the reforming Mahomedans of 1566, Yet I would not blame the leaders of these iconoclasts too harshly; for how were they to inspire the people with unflinching constancy in their resistance to the Spanish Catholic tyranny, if they did not suffer them to go into extremes. Many of the grave-stones on the floor belong to noble families. "What great lords lie buried here!" said the old woman [who conducted us]. "Real, grand, noble lords!" Those whose names I read were unknown to history, and how should it be otherwise? . . . . If I except the Wassenaars, not a single nobleman has earned himself a name in the history of the old republic; the nobles were the instigators of the enormities by which three Stadtholders, Maurice, William II., and William III. have stained their glory; and it is very remarkable that the province in which the nobles were the dominant class—Guelders—was always the betrayer of freedom, and always sought not merely to assist, but even to seduce the Orange family to assume the sovereignty, while it always evaded public burdens, and was rated incomparably below its just proportion in estimating its contingent. All the great men of the Republic were plebeians (and how many great men she produced!) excepting Admiral Opdam, who was a Wassenaar, consequently a nobleman of Holland, in which province the collective aristocracy had only one vote, and eighteen towns *each* a vote. The freedom of the Netherlands was founded by De Ryk, a burgher, when he constrained the aristocratic

commander of the *Watergeuzen* to go to Briel in 1572. I recollect, indeed, listening to discussions in Copenhagen in 1802, in which it was said that the nobility had been indispensable to Holland, and that even the so-called patrician families of Amsterdam had their origin in the sense of this necessity. It is certainly true that these last had placed themselves in *almost* exclusive possession of the magistracy; but what was the result?—stagnation and decay: and yet these families had by no means adopted aristocratic vices; on the contrary, their mode of life was as domestic and frugal as that of the old Romans. They meddled with nothing beyond their own municipalities, and preserved the old Dutch character so pure, that a democrat (I hold intercourse with every party in which well-informed men are to be found, *tous les genres sont bons, hors le genre ennuyeux*) has confessed to me, that dishonourable conduct and immorality were so unknown among these old Amsterdam families, that they could neither understand nor believe the existence of such vices. Still, on this very account, their intellect became more and more contracted within the sphere of their hereditary dignity. But their door was shut upon all foreigners, while the nobility roamed from court to court and adopted foreign manners. Forgive me this digression, dear Dora. “Let them sleep in their soft easy chairs unrenowned, and surrounded by the incense of their courtiers, such as these gentlemen had. Let them sleep thus now, and one day in their marble tombs still more forgotten and unfamed. Let them sleep then and now! By these unlaurelled tombs let the herald linger in barren wonder!” These words of Klopstock recurred to me most forcibly in the vestibule of the temple “where the marble’s golden mouth uttered names that no man knows.” I was doubly reminded of my feelings at the spots where the plebeian heroes, poets, and historians rested, which I shall renew by a pilgrimage to the shrines of my philological heroes at Leyden. One great man who lies here is immortal, together with his children; but William I., of Orange, came from Nassau, where Stein was born, and has spent his life; that must be a splendid air which preserves

good old blood, like old Rhine wine. . . . I wish I could describe to you the exterior magnificence of the structure, which transcends everything of the kind that I have seen, even the ruins of Elgin, Roslin, and Melrose; what magnificence it derives from the walls decorated with incredible richness, which rise between the windows round the choir up to the beginning of the clerestory; the freedom, grandeur, boldness of all the ornaments! If I could but draw, I should never be weary of it. . . .

AMSTERDAM, April 17th, 1808.

. . . . . The peasants of this neighbourhood are not proprietors but tenant-farmers. The ordinary term of the leases is six years; if a change is wished on either side, notice must be given at the end of the third year. The farms generally remain in the same families; there does not appear to be any great competition for farms, and we should be more correct in referring their continuance in the same families to this cause, than to the generosity of the landlords. M. De Smeth does not raise the rents of his tenants; he has only four in this neighbourhood, and one other farm near the heath. All the estates are very small here; but the farms are immensely large—generally from sixty to eighty acres, none under forty. The size of the acre differs very much here, even in neighbouring districts; the medium size is about the same as in Dithmarsh. In this neighbourhood, the rent is from fourteen to twenty-eight florins an acre, which is not excessive. The farmer is, however, obliged to pay ten per cent. on his farm as poll-tax; and the landlord pays an equal sum as land-tax; those who cultivate their own land, of course, have to bear both rates. This is their Holstein tax on usufruct *in folio*; for the peasants on the marsh, and even the poor heath-cutter in many parishes, pay a still heavier land-tax than that. The land-tax has recently been made uniform throughout the country, and it consequently presses very heavily on all the provinces except Holland. The poll-tax is, I believe, everywhere new.

Meanwhile what is the State to do? Such taxes are at any rate much better than the forced levies of the hundredth, or sometimes the twenty-fifth penny, which have been so often resorted to in this country, especially since 1795. For, previous to Gogel's ministry, through the exclusion of all who were versed in the subject, the finances of the first mercantile community in Europe had been administered from time immemorial in such a manner that any country less sustained by private virtue, industry, and frugality would have been ruined; yet Holland thrived and prospered exceedingly. And the State must have money: wherefore to blame is easy, but to act wisely very hard.

AMSTERDAM, April 24th, 1808.

. . . . . We saw the picture-gallery of my friend M. De Smeth last Monday, and to-day we have seen the noble pictures of Moses and Aaron in the Catholic Church. M. De Smeth's collection is considered the first in Amsterdam, and it is a fine one, but I would not exchange the smaller half of our Moltke's Italian pictures for this splendid gallery. It consists entirely of pieces from the Flemish school (almost exclusively by Dutch painters), among which there are only four by its intellectual masters, Rubens, Van Dyck, and Rembrandt. . . . . All are excellent paintings, but with a few exceptions, do they give more than pleasure? I keep to my opinion that the Flemish school, except where it is penetrated by the spirit of the Italian, stands in the same relation to the latter as memoirs to Thucydides, as a domestic drama to the *Oedipus Colonnus*. "The interlocutors in our pieces are ensigns, secretaries, or majors of hussars." I hasten to lead you, dear Dora (for this will perhaps interest no one but you, and certainly you the most), into a sanctuary—the Catholic Church. There, in the sacristy (where our guide was a sociable Franciscan), we became acquainted with a Dutch painter, whose soul was penetrated by Italy, but, *nota bene*, he was a Roman Catholic. His name is De Witt, and he is scarcely known out of his own country. This is already

the fourth great man of that name. The Annunciation has been painted a hundred times, but I never saw it elsewhere conceived as it is here. The picture is very low, perhaps eighteen inches high, and is placed over a door; Mary, rapt in ecstasy, bending forwards—a profile the angel, also in profile, floating towards her, little more than the head and shoulders visible. The silken ethereal hair of the angel, and his countenance, belong to something above this earth, such as Raphael or Guido might have imagined and represented them. He has no wings, he is no genius. There is an excellent altar-piece by the same De Witt, a Crucifixion . . . . . and several other pictures of which I will say more when we have seen them again, for we have promised the friar to attend mass there next Sunday. But there is one treasure which I cannot pass over in silence, it is one of the most glorious things that can be seen anywhere. It is an Italian piece; but the good fathers, who are very careless and ignorant, do not know the name of the artist, and I am not sufficiently initiated to form a conjecture. It is St. Francis in an ecstasy, conducted by angels up to heaven.

AMSTERDAM, April 26th, 1808.

. . . . . The *fiacres* here are good, and drive extremely fast, but they cost two or three times as much as those in Copenhagen, and are by no means sufficiently numerous, now that the Court has been transferred hither, and a crowd of persons are occasionally obliged to appear at Court; for, in proportion to the wealth of the citizens, very few private carriages are kept, every one being accustomed to go on foot to dinner-parties,—a proceeding which the cleanliness of the streets renders not disagreeable. Yesterday, there was a state ball here, and the want of carriages was so great, that many of the aristocratic guests were forced to take refuge in another kind of conveyance peculiar to Holland, and generally used by none but the wives of the shopkeepers for going to church or making calls. It is composed of a coach-body containing four seats, and placed on a sledge; it is drawn by

one horse, and the driver walks beside it with the reins in his hand, and holds up the vehicle when it is in danger of upsetting as it descends the often very high and steep bridges over the canals. Such a conveyance is only endurable on this most excellent pavement; anywhere else its effects would be like what the great Kant experienced, when he once, through absence of mind, placed himself in a sledge, and ordered the man to drive him out, just when a rapid thaw had laid bare most of the stones. Such a sledge, however, would have been a treasure to me the other day if it had been standing near our hotel about eleven o'clock: for the hour struck, and my confounded hackney-coach, which I had ordered to be here half an hour earlier, was not to be seen. What was I to do? I knew not whether it was a levee or a private audience: in the former case, there was no hurry, in the latter, I must not be a minute behind my time. I was obliged to make all safe by supposing the worst, and so I departed on foot, threading my way as far as possible through small side-streets, with my *chapeau-bas* under my arm (fortunately the weather was fine), my sword at my side, and no upper-coat over my court-suit. The Amsterdam people, who are happily as yet strangers to Court life, did not laugh at this unheard-of costume, but looked at me attentively as a very great man!

AMSTERDAM, *April 29th*, 1808.

. . . . . At last the king came. He is a good height, at least a full hand's breadth taller than myself,—thin, has a yellow sickly complexion, still his appearance was more healthy than I had expected; he wore (the dress is always stated in Court circulars) the uniform of the Guards, and the broad red French ribbon over his coat, likewise the French star above his own. He went round the circle from one to another, and conversed a short time with each, in such a low voice that your next neighbour, who always draws back as the king approaches you, cannot hear anything distinctly; the answer must be given in an equally low tone. He staid the



longest with the deputation from Groningen, who seemed to find some difficulty in understanding the French language, and though the king is said to understand Dutch very well, he speaks it as yet but imperfectly. When he came to me, and I had been presented, he directly began to talk to me in a very friendly manner. He asked after you, dear father: "*Etes-vous parent du savant illustre de votre nom?*" . . . . I hope you will esteem this good king independently of this honour; I have indeed always spoken favourably of him to you; for, of all the sovereigns who have ascended a hereditary throne, there is not one perhaps who has the welfare of his people more sincerely at heart; he has, moreover, already succeeded to a high degree in winning the affection of the nation, at least of those who have come into immediate contact with him, while he, on his part, knows how to appreciate all their national excellences, which is saying a great deal for a Frenchman. The Dutch cannot dissimulate (except the revolutionists), and when they display tokens of attachment, as they did at the king's reception, they mean it sincerely. Their annoyance at the loss of the Stadthaus has already passed away, and if only the air of Amsterdam agrees with the king's health as well as that of Utrecht, of which I doubt however, it may be a good thing in every respect that he has come hither. In Amsterdam there are still many inveterate Orangists, most excellent individuals, who have hitherto kept themselves aloof; these will now gradually grow reconciled to the new order of things, and many able men will be gained for the administration. . . . .

AMSTERDAM, May 8th, 1808.

. . . . . This immense village [Saardam], now numbering above 14,000 inhabitants, lies on the northern shore of the Yssel, about an hour and a quarter's sail, by a favourable light breeze, obliquely from Amsterdam to the north-west. It was formerly celebrated for its enormous docks for ship-building, saw-mills, oil-mills, paper-mills, &c., and the seat not only of great, to us inconceivable, wealth, but also of general comfort.

How changed is its present condition ! We have seen there more visible decline and bitter poverty than in any other place. Most of the mills (of which there have been I should think several hundreds, but certainly never, as it says in a description of Amsterdam generally used by foreigners here, 2300), are standing still ; the saw-mills for want of wood, the paper-mills for want of rags, and a sale for their paper. The workmen and their children are in tatters, and want is visible in their looks ; else they are a particularly comely race of people,—the women, at least, who are quite different from those of Amsterdam, though, there too, there are many most lovely children. Saardam consists of one street lying on both banks of the little stream, the Zaan, which is there broad (nearly as broad as the Binnen-Alster at Hamburg), so that the backs of the houses with their little gardens are close to the river ; part of it, too, lies upon a dam which is carried straight across the mouth of the river and is furnished with sluices, and part, round the banks of the harbour. The street is paved with tiles, with which the principal new high-roads are also paved ; it must be a very expensive kind of pavement, now that all fuel has risen to an unheard-of price, in consequence of the tax on turf. The houses, all one story high, are mostly of wood, or at least, have wooden gables which terminate in points of carved wood-work, like those of an old-fashioned bureau ; and most of them are painted bright-green, which has a very singular, but not unpleasing effect. Many houses of the better kind, which are inhabited perhaps by *millionaires* (for there are such here still), have a very respectable appearance, though none are large, and the gardens are as stiff, as clean, and as shadowless as possible.

All travellers visit the hut of Peter the Czar, which he constructed for himself in 1679, and where he lived for nine months, while he was learning and practising the art of ship-building. It is called a house, but that is far too good a name for it. There are only two rooms, or, rather, the hut is divided into two parts by a boarded partition, and the front room was in fact all in all ; the second contained only

his Russian bath. All travellers are required to inscribe their names in a book, and many do not omit to accompany it with reflections. I did the former, and contributed something towards the preservation of the monument, but dispensed with the reflections. Yet the same questions recurred to me which have often been forced upon me by this story; was it on the whole a sensible idea of Peter's, to wish for a fleet, since he sought the result only as a means? Something may be said in its favour, however, at that period, after the conquest of Azov; at that time, and up to the Peace of Pruth, his eyes were fixed on the conquest of Constantinople, and of the Crimea as a first step, and for this purpose he certainly required a fleet. It is not known out of Russia, where I myself first learnt it, that he intended to have founded his true Petersburg at Azov; that in the north was but a secondary affair, and he did not send colonists thither till 1711, as a *pis aller*. At the date of that unhappy peace, the citadel of the southern Petersburg was already completed, and its dockyards and arsenals prepared. Another question is, whether he could not have lived just as well in a less barbarous hut, and what use there is in the cynicism of choosing to live not merely without superfluities, but like a beggar? It could hardly be from affectation, Peter was not much given to that; but it undeniably shows a lack of civilisation, in which I find nothing particularly admirable, though the *hut* is the object of admiration with most visitors. His ruling idea, that he would learn all those arts of the civilised world in which his own nation was deficient, was truly great,—so great, that in spite of all his savage rudeness, we have less right to deny him the epithet which has become inseparable from his name, than almost any other sovereign. His energy was as great as that of a wild beast. . . . . But I am just as bad if history comes in my way as M. Van — with his finance. I have wasted my paper, and must now only hasten to say that we reached home very pleasantly. . . . .

HAARLEM, May 13th, 1808.

. . . . . For the first few miles after leaving Amsterdam, the banks of the canal are mostly occupied with country houses, and a pretty village, Sloterdijk, also consists in part of such villas. Afterwards, the land becomes, if possible, still lower, and too moist and soft even for a pasture; in many places it is, I should think, scarcely an inch above the level of the canal, and then without a dam; where it lies a little lower it is protected by a dam, about one and a half or two feet high. All the land hereabouts is laid up for hay. This country lasts rather more than half way, where the Leyden lake is separated from the Yssel by a considerable dyke, and pours its overflow into the latter through a sluice. Here the course of the canal is interrupted, and you have to pass a portage, as in Siberia and Canada. But the *schuyt* does not accompany you as in those countries; you leave it and enter another *schuyt* at the beginning of another canal. Here we gained a companion, a citizen of Haarlem, who had formerly been a sea-captain, as the crew of the boat told us afterwards. We could not have wished for a better travelling companion: he smoked, indeed, and without apologising for it; but what Dutch burgher does not smoke? He was extremely unassuming and polite, but very communicative; and as I can now get on pretty well in pure Dutch, we got so deep into conversation, that I entirely forgot to look at the places we were passing through. Not till our return to-day (I am continuing this at Amsterdam on the evening of the 13th) did I observe that the low meadows continue till rather more than a mile from Haarlem, where the land rises a little, and forms beautiful meadows dotted over with fine cattle; but the eye seeks in vain for anything but grass. In the distance, towards the north (for on the left stretches the Leyden lake), you see numerous villages built in a straggling manner, and the single farmhouses lying nearer to you have a very good effect in the distance. My companion told us that the rents had risen in this part from thirty to sixty florins for grass land, and in the neighbourhood of the towns

(where the land is probably used for gardens), to seventy and even a hundred. . . . . The land reclaimed from the lakes is by far the best in Holland ; and I understand that the Diemer-meer, after having been cultivated for nearly two centuries, is not yet exhausted, and requires very little manuring, although a great deal of it is used for gardens. At this moment, in spite of all their calamities, the Dutch are about to drain the Naarden-meer. In Dithmarsh we have not even freed our levels from water ; but here there are strict and excellent old laws respecting the drainage. Here I can constrain my neighbour to allow me to free my land from water so long as I do not injure him. From time immemorial, in every district a tribunal has sat for the settlement of such questions, which can give summary decisions, except in important cases where an appeal to the superior courts of the same nature, having a more extensive jurisdiction, is permitted. I cannot, however, learn from what time the oldest written laws about the dykes and sluices date ; they have one in England, in Kent, of the twelfth century, which is said to be a model of its kind. I beg pardon of those who are not interested in this digression. But I could wish that many of my fellow-countrymen, Danes and Holsteiners, could have listened to the further discourse of my Haarlem friend, and laid it to heart. Since 1793, he said, he had had in his ordinary trade, taking one year with another, a minus of more than 2000 florins a year ; without including the public burdens, which merely in property taxes have amounted, ever since 1793, to about thirty-five per cent of the capital, of which indeed rather more than the half, being a forced loan, has yielded interest, but so low that the bonds are only worth about a third of the capital. " Well now," he said, " I was obliged to reflect how I could cover my loss by some other business ; an industrious man cannot fail of finding one. I could face every fresh imposition of property-tax as it was laid on ; I was bent upon earning it back again if possible. And nearly all of us everywhere in Holland have done the same, and this is why we have stood our ground, and shall, please God,

even recover ourselves in time. It was formerly a maxim with us, that he who had a fixed income sufficient for his comfortable maintenance, should live so economically as to lay up a third of his receipts." (And I who write this must add that this was not done at the cost of humanity; the contributions for Leyden after the great calamity, amounted I think to 1,000,000 florins, a very small part of which was contributed from foreign countries, namely, 700 Louis d'ors from France and Brabant, and £6000 from England; on the other hand, Leyden has now contributed voluntarily for Walcheren with the rest of the country.) "Then if a misfortune occurred, he retrenched his expences but never touched his capital. Thus it is also a maxim with us, that no one ought to venture more than a third of his property in any single speculation." Oh, that our rural population had reasoned thus in the prosperous times! For, as it is, the lean kine are like to swallow all the rest up. But here, where the free administrative institutions, which still exist to a certain extent, formerly, when they were quite intact, imposed upon the municipal authorities obligations that were morally binding upon them as citizens, such as are unknown in absolute monarchies, and which the people of Dithmarsh have let slip from them;—here, where a superior official, for instance a *Baljuw*, who answers pretty much to a *Landvogt*\* with us, if he were to introduce and promote luxury and frivolity in a little town, instead of repressing them with severity, would not only be despised, but render himself for ever ineligible; here, where the federative partition inspired a general activity and gave a common interest to the administration of each place,—the good seed found a good soil and careful tending. I abide by my old conviction, which is constantly receiving confirmation, that it is not reading and writing and so-called knowledge, which benefit the common people and mankind in general; but old hereditary maxims of conduct, such as these: that debt is disgraceful, and the increasing of your property by honest means, honourable, if you have time to give to it; that each one is made to fulfil

\* Prefect.

his own vocation, and must devote his life entirely to it, whereby reason and judgment will develop themselves spontaneously if they exist;—particularly if the governments leave all commercial affairs to be settled by free arrangements among the consumers themselves, which is not overstepping their proper sphere. For every occupation which a man thoroughly understands is improving to him, and he whose nature is uncorrupted, and who takes an interest in it, will do it well. Every occupation which you do not learn thoroughly, not only succeeds ill, but corrupts yourself also; and hence it is, that when learned men meddle with the direction of general public affairs late in life, they not only turn out miserable bunglers, but degenerate in their own moral character. . . .

AMSTERDAM, *May 14th*, 1808.

. . . . . One of the more important pieces of information that I got from my travelling companion, was a confirmation of the statement that, everywhere in the towns here, the houses have fallen one-third in value, while the value of money has altered nearly in the same proportion, through the fall in the treasury bonds since the Revolution, and the public burdens have so increased, that my friend was obliged to pay more than 1000 florins land-tax, last year, for an estate, on which he formerly paid 240 florins. That, however, was an extraordinary year; for they had to pay the arrears of an augmentation ordered in the previous year, and, at the same time, to deposit payments in anticipation. The price of land has risen much; hence the rents of the farms have also risen. Now they seem to be rather falling, because no exportation of butter and cheese can take place. But as there are no large estates at all in Holland, according to our standard; as no one makes purchases beyond his means, and the payments are made in cash, the prices can neither be forced up too high, nor are the same bad consequences to be found as in countries where this is not the case. . . . Haarlem is said to contain only 20,000 inhabitants, which

is a great decrease, compared with old times. But the town shows no signs of decay or impoverishment. It is one of the most lively-looking places that I ever recollect to have seen. The streets are broad, and not laid out by the line, excepting the *Grachten*, which here, too, are not wanting; the houses are in good condition, few of them large; the inhabitants are well-dressed, and look healthy, the common people as well as the middle classes. The cleanliness of the streets is perfect. The main *Gracht* is entirely paved with bricks, which very essentially convenience the foot passenger only meets with in general on the smaller half of the streets lying next the canal. A similar stripe of bricks generally runs along each side of the main streets, on the farther side of the gutter from the houses, and serves as a *trottoir*; for the part between the houses and the gutter is fenced off, and large slabs of marble are laid down here and there, so that there is no path along the houses, and the foot-passenger who should intentionally step on these slabs of marble, where they are not defended by chains drawn across them, and sully their radiant purity, would get many black looks. The canals are bordered in the town, as they are also in Amsterdam, with a row of tall trees, but these are much finer in Haarlem than here, quite like those of a park. Other open places, besides, in Haarlem are planted with shady avenues of very fine growth. You recognise in everything the city of gardeners. We did not walk round Haarlem on the Cingel; I should think it would take an hour to do so. This promenade is one of the most beautiful in the country. At the foot of the old town-walls, which are in very good preservation and not so desolate-looking as those of Utrecht, about eight feet of the moat have been enclosed. This is all laid out in gardens, and the whole wall as far as we have seen it, is turned into an espalier with flourishing fruit-trees. On the south side of Haarlem lies a beech wood which seems to be a plantation, but is old, and does not derive its charms merely from the fact that there is nothing like it to be seen in the whole country, except at the Hague, where indeed, the wood is said to be



much larger. Besides, we had not walked in a beech-wood for more than two years, and the pine-woods of Livonia last year had made little amends to us. Round this grove, through which several avenues lead to the city gate, are numerous country houses, among which that of the Hope family is duly distinguished by its splendour. It was built in the early days of the firm, when they were as yet simple English merchants, an honourable title, whatever you may think of the English Government and State. It is built in the Italian style, but has been since enlarged and disfigured by all sorts of incongruous additions, which is a great pity, for it is a princely building, such as no private individual could afford in the North. It is now closed to visitors, because many have committed injuries, as is sufficiently proved by the numerous inscriptions on the Egyptian lions lying within the iron entrance-gates. Thus you are now only able to see through these the building and its fore-court, in which there stands an excellent cast of the Laocoon in lead. Before the year 1795, this place also contained, in three saloons, the finest picture-gallery in the country. It belonged properly to the family of Thomas Hope, who has lived in England since then, and removed his pictures there for safety, so that, in all probability, they will never return. We failed of our special object, namely, the hyacinths in bloom—a sight which draws all Amsterdam to Haarlem. The heat, followed by the heavy rains, had destroyed them prematurely; and, in the gardens of the principal florist, we only saw some fading relics: nothing but the jonquils and early double tulips were now in bloom. We came rather late, and the workmen had left; one of whom usually shows you round for a fee. The proprietor himself showed us everything, even to his hot-houses, with the greatest politeness. Altogether, the longer I remain here, the less I can understand how the Dutch should have a character for incivility. They do not cringe and flatter; and anyone who should intrude himself upon them would run the risk of getting a very rough repulse; but unless you act thus, you are certain to be treated with nothing but kindness and

sociability, whether by the common people or the higher ranks. There is never any risk of your receiving a reluctant, not to say an uncivil answer, if you ask a stranger the way to a house, or any similar question. . . . On the Saturday evening, we had visited the great church. It is very insignificant in point of architecture, and had we known that it contained so few monuments, and that the ignorant sacristan could not even explain what these were, we should have stayed away. The only remarkable thing to me was a large tablet, erected in the year 1582, containing the apology of the city for having surrendered to the Spaniards in 1573, under pressure of hunger. It does great credit to the profound sense of honour in those times that this should have been deemed necessary; for the capitulation did not take place till all the provisions and even the cats had been consumed, and a multitude of the inhabitants had died of the famine-fever. Things have changed since then; and what is now called a most glorious defence, would then have been thought very little of. Leyden was more fortunate, since its siege was raised; but it can scarcely have endured more than Haarlem. The tablet relates that, after the capitulation, their burdens were no lighter than before; but each citizen, however poor, was ground down by having soldiers quartered upon him; they were obliged to maintain two, and sometimes three soldiers in every house. This seems to have been considered, at that time, an unheard-of and intolerable act of oppression; things are changed in this respect too. The distress lasted, more or less severely, for five years, till Haarlem was enabled to throw off the Spanish yoke, during the general insurrection. There hangs in the church, between two towers, a model of a ship of the line: if the story of the sacristan have any sense at all, this must be the one which first stormed the forts of the Thames in 1667,—an event of which the Dutch are very fond of talking, while the English historians pass over it very lightly.

AMSTERDAM, May 20th, 1808.

. . . . . I broke off in my account of the town-hall at Haarlem, with the specimens of printing attributed to Laurence Koster. . . . . Whether it was owing to my poring over these as they considered in a very learned way, or to any other cause, I know not; but, as we were leaving, one of the *huissiers* offered to show us the old Hall of the *Vroedschaps*. Before the Revolution of 1795, the *Vroedschappen* were the Council of the Dutch towns; they were chosen for life, and filled up themselves any vacancies which occurred in their number; they had no share in the executive or in the administration of justice, which rested with the burgomasters and aldermen, but, according to law, they were the real possessors of the sovereignty, as they chose these executive functionaries, and also the deputies to the Estates of Holland, to whom they dictated the course they were to take on the matters to be brought before the Estates. The first act of the Revolution was to do away with these old Councils. They have now been restored in name; but, as might be expected, they are now much about what the Council of Thirty-two is in Copenhagen, only with this difference, that they are divided into commissions, which really have the direction of some minor matters of police, &c.; however the *name* at least has been brought back! It was not by chance, that I mentioned that Council in Copenhagen, now an empty and unmeaning phantom. For I am convinced, that if we could trace out the original idea and purpose of the new institutions of the years 1659 and 1660, by studying the archives, which has never yet been possible, very many Dutch ideas would come to light in municipal arrangements; and it would be seen, among other things, that that Council, which was founded before the introduction of the monarchy, was formed upon the model of the Dutch *Vroedschappen*. The influence of Holland upon Denmark before the monarchy, was greater than that of Germany itself. How many words and phrases in Danish are of Dutch origin! Christian II. even wished to form his

national institutions on the footing of the Netherlands, which would have been by far the most suitable; and the tyranny of Spain which drove thousands into exile, may have sent not a few into the then still barbarous towns of Denmark,—an emigration, which was more beneficial to the countries which received the fugitives than that of the refugees, or the princes and officers. I, who have but a superficial acquaintance with the earlier periods of Danish history, remember a Dutchman who was burgomaster of Copenhagen under Christian IV. After 1660, when Denmark became an absolute monarchy, everything was changed; the Germans of the Empire were more congenial to an absolute monarchy, and the Netherlands were no longer wanderers by necessity, war, or choice; from that time forwards, the traces of their institutions grow fainter and fainter, as will soon be the case also with the language of the island of Amak.

There are some excellent paintings in the hall of the *Vroedschappen*, but we sadly felt the want of a well-informed guide. I care little for the Flemish painters except in portraits, and works of a similar class; but in those they are in truth masters. . . . There are also portraits in this hall dating from the eighteenth century, and here, too, it is striking to see how art suddenly became extinct at the close of the seventeenth century. It was at its summit during the most arduous struggles of the war of independence, and it maintained its elevation till the greatness of the national mind departed with the De Witts. This is no fanciful remark, but very easily to be explained. . . .

AMSTERDAM, May 29th, 1808.

It had long been our intention to make a little excursion into the neighbouring districts of North-Holland, in order to see that land of butter and cheese, and the village of Broek, so famous for its neatness. . . .

North-Holland has reaped much advantage from the high price of its products; and the tokens of its prosperity are

everywhere visible. Many of the houses are of wood, and are small. As tillage is entirely unknown here, the husbandman wants nothing but a stable, and a hay-stack, from which he cuts his hay in great slices, as sharply and neatly as in England. . . . We passed two water-mills, used for draining water off the land. Not *one* alone, as I told you, but *three* lakes are now in course of drainage,—and in these hard times! The road is excellent, it is formed of the refuse of the tileries. Little villages with their churches lie all around, and the whole country is very thickly peopled; though a few hundred years ago it consisted of nothing but moors, bogs, and lakes. But it all lies in grass. Broek is bounded by the canal, and divided into tiny islands by a number of ditches, which are crossed by such narrow bridges, that it would certainly be impossible to ride or drive in the village; indeed, to do so might occasion an abomination on the streets, which would quite shock the cleanliness of the Broekites. The place consists of about a hundred houses; on the other side of the canal there is a sort of suburb where the poorer classes dwell, which is not distinguished in any respect from other Dutch villages. The village itself is inhabited by persons of independent property, who are immensely rich: they may have lost a great deal, as it is generally reported; but they are certainly in a fair way to accumulate it again. They lead the most monotonous and tiresome life in the world. The men come to Amsterdam now and then, where they formerly did a good deal of business in insurances, as it was difficult to invest their money here, but they are said to have paid dearly for their attempts. The women visit each other regularly at coffee time, about half-past five: of course the visits are paid alternately. All Broek, *i.e.* all its richer inhabitants, form one family-circle from which the rest of Holland is excluded, and they form also one family amongst themselves; but a family whose members care for nothing but slowly scraping together gold, have no mutual affection, find each other tiresome, and no doubt for the most part envy and hate each other from the bottom of their hearts. Scarcely a creature

is to be seen in the streets; the few grown-up persons you meet have a dull, half silly look, and the children are precisely like those of the poor good ——'s whom we used to see in Riga. All the windows towards the street are closed inside with shutters, or at least with impenetrable curtains; the inhabitants of the house sit in the back rooms. Yet the houses are certainly very pretty in the peasant style; many of them as pretty as you could wish to see. The little gardens are dolls' gardens, full of box-trees cut into the shapes of animals, and rows of great white and blue china balls, arranged in figures intended to represent flowering plants, broken bits of red and yellow tiles being placed among the outlines of the leaves to stand for tulips or other flowers. The street is paved with very neat yellow bricks, laid edgewise, and is strewn with fine sand; it is as clean as the floor of a very tidily kept house; and before the houses, the brick pavement is inlaid with red stones in figures of various kinds, such as circles, stars, hearts, &c.

We looked into the church, where the congregation, at least the larger part of it, were taking their afternoon nap. A stupid dominie was howling out a sermon, utterly destitute of ideas—we remained long enough to be sure of this, so that I write it with a good conscience—and was making as wise a use of his time as ——, I mean he drawled out his words so that he could go on bellowing as long as possible, without a single thought, and with the least possible expenditure of words. Broek gave me no pleasure, and I cannot echo the universal cry that no one should leave Amsterdam without seeing it. Dutch cleanliness is such a good thing in itself, and in this country such a physical necessity (just as it would be found very beneficial in our marshes), that it does not amuse, but annoys me to see to what it can degenerate, when, divorced from industry and activity, it becomes the unmeaning finery of a stupid boor. The sight of the faulty exaggeration of the principles of industry and frugality, so good in themselves, pains me just in the same way. I said to Milly on the road, that, if I were a ruler, it would make my heart heavy to see a Dutch village, and compare it with

the villages of my own country. But I could see Broek without envy, and perhaps be unable to repress the fear that, if I succeeded in making my villages like those of Holland, I might put them in the way of becoming such as this lifeless convent of money-grubbers. . . .

Yesterday, Van Swieden, the celebrated natural philosopher, appointed two o'clock for me to call on him. I was punctual, and only wish the result of our interview had afforded me what I expected. But when at last, after Van Swieden had read me a long lecture which I had neither asked nor wished for, upon the extraordinary moderation exhibited during the Revolution of 1795, and other *politica*, I succeeded in putting in a word, and could turn the conversation on the physical geography of the country, it appeared to my sorrow, that this really very distinguished natural philosopher had troubled himself very little about it, and knew absolutely nothing of agriculture. Of the nature of marsh districts he had positively no definite idea; and it really seemed to me that, because the formation of these provinces is so very easily explained, he had never troubled himself at all to determine which districts of Holland had been formed by the rivers, and which by the sea. I will give you a short outline of the information I have collected here from various sources, and with some labour. The whole province of Holland consists, firstly, of peat-mosses; secondly, of lakes, some natural, having been left behind by the rivers, some artificial, caused by digging turf; thirdly, of downs and sands. In North Holland alone, towards the Texel, there are some small marshes, called here *coggen*, no doubt a Frisian word, and the root of our term *koog*. At the present time, however, actual peat-mosses with a surface of the original turf exist only in a few corners and recesses of the province, as for instance, in Krimpener-weerd. But I find I cannot pursue this subject in this letter. . . . Fancy, as a specimen of his [Van Swieden's] judgment, that he, though making pretensions to a knowledge of mathematics and astronomy (because he has peeped through a telescope at Bode's, but he confessed, when I sounded him a little, that he did not understand the manage-

ment of astronomical instruments), that he, I say, has allowed himself to be gulled into seriously believing that the German Ocean lies as high as the highest spires of Amsterdam, *i.e.*, at least 250 feet above the streets, so that in the Zuyder Zee all the laws of hydrostatics must be suspended! . . . .

AMSTERDAM, June 1st, 1808.

. . . . . Professor Van Swieden is, with good reason, celebrated as a natural philosopher. His services in the cause of science must procure him our pardon for the part he played in the Dutch Revolution, which led to his being made a member of the Batavian Directory. He was not indeed one of the most furious partizans of the Revolution, still, he joined cordially in the overthrow of the old constitution, and everything connected with it. He seems still to live in these ideas; and it amused me to hear how he inveighed against the *Bredists*, who, on the 21st January, 1798, expelled some twenty deputies belonging to the more moderate revolutionists from the Assembly, and ordered their arrest; and, on the other hand, called the arrest of the High Pensionary, Van der Spiegel, and other Orangists an extremely lenient measure, because they were not guillotined;—how he vauntingly related to me, at first, that not the slightest excesses had occurred in the Revolution of 1795, and then, when I named a list of such (it will indeed always redound to the honour of the Dutch that no more occurred, but the victorious general held them in check), found them all so excusable, that by the same reasoning he would certainly have been obliged to defend hanging and burning, if such things had occurred. As a politician, he reminded me of our German scholars during the revolutionary years, and of a remark of old Dr. Hensler, who was anything but a revolutionist himself,—that medical men and physical philosophers were, above all other classes of learned men, inclined to push the views of this party to the most extreme length; the causes of which are not difficult to find. . . . .

The first institution of which I shall give you an account,



is the *Werkhuis* or workhouse. This consists of two sections, the spinning-house, or house of correction, and the workhouse. The former was the older institution, and richly endowed; and when it was removed from its old locality to the very extensive new buildings erected about the year 1780, and was united with the workhouse, its old over-indulgent regulations were so entirely maintained, that its inmates are better off than the beggars, or the poor who work voluntarily; the former, for instance, eat at a covered table, out of tin plates, with tin spoons; the latter only off bare wooden benches, out of basons, with wooden spoons. A scandalous absurdity,—only explicable through the great respect of the Dutch for all rights and properties, and which the Revolution ought to have removed in preference to many others. Of course, the men and women are separated, and also the two classes of inmates never come into contact. The number of the female prisoners is not large, perhaps about a fortieth of the whole; but here, as everywhere, when they are left together, instead of improving by their imprisonment, they rather corrupt each other. It is inconceivable how this shocking error should have been committed here.

AMSTERDAM, *June 4th*, 1808.

. . . . . The workhouse, the second department of the establishment, contains vagrants belonging to the town (the strangers are packed off without mercy, and only allowed to remain three nights in the beggars' asylum), loose characters who are placed here by the authorities, and poor people who enter it voluntarily. Their work is very light, and they are even allowed the whole of Saturday for themselves, like the negroes in Spanish America! Their food is wholesome and good,—warm dishes twice a day, a pound of meat a week, or bacon instead. They are allowed to enjoy the open air in the large court-yards at appointed hours. The poor who enter it voluntarily can never be turned out again so long as they choose to remain. Their clothing is coarse, but sufficient; cleanliness is enforced by the strictest rules. There

is a bath for new comers, and a copper in which their clothes are boiled—very necessary provisions! The whole number of inmates is about 650. A large proportion of them are children, not merely beggar-children, but also young criminals, whom their age alone has saved from execution; and for these there is a school: but I fear that this, with everything that relates to their moral discipline, is less praiseworthy than those portions of the institution having reference to their bodily wants. The order and cleanliness of the place are astonishing. All great institutions of this kind here, are under the superintendence of directors and directresses, chosen from the highest classes of the citizens. Of course, their services are given without remuneration, and they have work enough to do. Under these there is, at least in the workhouse, an inspector, and under him stand the overseers, who are called “Fathers” and “Mothers.” Every institution has its infirmary, and most of the large ones their own dispensary likewise. In the diet of the sick nothing is spared; they receive the best wheaten bread, and all the indulgences that they wish for. The workhouse is supported by the city; all the other institutions of which I am about to speak, have been founded and endowed by private individuals, and the deficiencies in their funds are made up by subscriptions, which even in these times, have never yet been found insufficient.

The second institution of which I shall speak is the Citizens' Orphan House, containing from 600 to 700 children. This is quite a model institution, managed on the system I have just described. None but the orphans of citizens of Amsterdam are received into it. They remain till they have completed their 20th year, and are instructed,—the girls in women's employments, the boys in handicrafts, or navigation, besides the usual school education. They are allowed to learn anything except locksmiths' work, which is not taught lest they should be tempted to break open each other's chests: for each child has its own chest, with its own number and key, for the clothes and little things it has brought with it. We have only seen that part of the building containing the girls and the little boys, and I could never have thought that

an orphan-house could present so cheerful a spectacle. When we came in, the bigger girls were sitting working in the handsome wide court-yards; the little ones were playing as merrily as if they had been in their own homes. During the interval that we had passed in the directors' rooms, the little ones had taken their supper, and as we went upstairs to their dormitories—where we were not less delighted with the fresh pure air than with the cleanliness and neatness of their beds—came the hour for going to bed, and the whole stream rushed up the staircase with us. The little creatures were not at all shy, and were continually laughing at my spectacles. How I wish our Christine could have seen this sight! That the children are extremely well treated I need hardly say, still you would not expect to find them in such blooming health in houses of this kind. Further, they are neither too strictly secluded, nor yet sent out in large processions to take the air, as is so often the case with these schools, and no *Currenden*\* singing is practised. They are allowed to go out at certain times, for, just as the “Mothers” seem to exercise a truly maternal care over them, so they are not more confined than order requires, or than they would be in the house of good parents. Here, again, we see the sound, excellent, old Dutch intelligence. So Howard is said to have declared, that the wisdom of the founders astonished him almost more than the number of benevolent contributors. There is something really venerable in the countenances of the “Mothers” in these charitable institutions of Amsterdam. In this Orphan House the instruction also seems to be very judicious. If a boy displays talent, and his inclinations tend that way, he is transferred to the grammar-school. All the children wear a quaint attire, one side of their dress being brown, the other red, and it is prohibited under heavy penalties to allow any one in this uniform to enter the theatre, public-houses, &c.

The Deacons' Orphan House receives children whose

\* It is the custom in many of the charitable schools in Germany for the pupils to go out at stated times to sing before the doors of the houses, for which they usually receive a small alms. This practice is called *Currenden* singing.

parents belonged to the Reformed Church, and lived in Amsterdam, but were not burgesses of the city. It is not so rich as the last-mentioned, and its arrangements are less perfect, but there are several hundred pupils.

The aged poor are certainly nowhere in the world so well cared for as here. The first and finest institution for this object is the so-called *Bessieshuis*, or *Oude Mannen en Vrouwenhuis*, on the Amstel. This is for the Reformed community. It was originally destined for the reception of old women only, and built with reference to this object; but during its erection a large legacy was bequeathed to it for the benefit of old men. At present, the old women have about a hundred and forty chambers in several long corridors; there are usually four women in a room, each of whom has a separate bed. There is scarcely ever a single room standing empty, and very few are limited to two persons: we may, perhaps, calculate the number of their inhabitants at 520. Here they certainly have everything that can possibly be necessary for them, and it is given them willingly and kindly. Great pains are taken to avoid all occasion for the squabbling to which old women are generally so prone, by placing together those of congenial dispositions; the very cleanly are placed together, and so are also the less particular: on this subject one of the "Mothers" expressed herself very sensibly. For the same reason, their intercourse with each other is limited to one day in the week, when they are allowed to drink tea in each other's rooms. They are permitted to go out two days in the week, and on Sunday after service. Between the two wings of the building there is a large and really pretty garden, in which they can take the air, and there are benches provided for their use. Their lot is truly happy, if we except the hardship that always seems connected with forced companionship, which, however, is perhaps less of a trouble to old gossips than to any other class. The men are not so well off; they are all collected in a common room half underground; and their dormitories, in which they are dreadfully cramped for room, are also underground. The plan of the building had been already

settled, and the money left for them was not sufficient for a new building. This is one of the extremely rare cases in which women are better off than men. The room appropriated for those who are quite infirm from age is also in the lower part of the building, and not happily chosen; they are brought here when their powers are quite exhausted, and are never taken up stairs again till they die. These formed a numerous class; the sick were much fewer. I would have given them more light; I should wish it for myself. It is, I think, on completing their sixtieth year that persons are eligible to this institution.

In the court of this building, with an entrance into its garden, stands Corver's Court, founded by a married couple, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, for thirty old couples, and afterwards enlarged by a lady so as to admit four more. Each pair have there a very good room to themselves, furnished with what is already in the house and what they bring with them. You could not conceive a more cheerful spectacle; the old people have an extremely touching expression of contentedness and thankfulness to Providence for having reached this haven. But, on the death of one of the partners, the other must remove to the large house, and make way for another couple. The founders have only reserved to their family the presentation of five or six of these chambers, and wisely placed the rest in the gift of the usual directors and directresses. Here each couple keep house for themselves; there is no common refectory, &c.

The Lutheran community, which is here very numerous, had no advantage from the almshouses of the dominant Church. When the congregation (consisting almost entirely of Germans or the descendants of Germans) had become rich, they founded an *Oude Mannen en Vrouwen*, or *Besteedelingshuis*, for themselves; which also affords board and lodging to about 350 persons. Here the men are better provided for; indeed quite as well as the women. The principal difference between the two institutions consists in the latter having no cells, but common halls, which are divided by a row of beds placed against each other down

the centre of the rooms. Each of these beds is destined for two, which seems a hardship; yet you could not see more cheerful, smiling countenances than those of these old people. They have very little to do; and with a sufficiency of simple food, live as idly and contentedly as so many prebends,—for man is generally a lazy animal. They play at bowls, however, a little, so that they do not find the time too heavy on their hands; the old ladies sew in a hall. We found here a rough-mannered matron, who spoke kindly enough to the old people, except when there was the least trace of disorder, but appeared very much put out at having to show us about. Hence it was, no doubt, that she answered my very natural question, to what age the inmates generally lived, with the *naïve* piece of incivility, “As old as the Lord lets them.” I heard afterwards, however, that an old man had reached the age of 102, and two women were there who were about ninety, and very well. Here, too, there is a garden for the benefit of the aged inmates.

Besides these large institutions, there are a number of smaller ones founded by private persons, and called Courts. These are usually built round a garden, with separate entrances, and are not only destined for the reception of absolutely indigent aged people, but also for such as have something of their own, but too little to live upon. The State formerly gave no pensions, except to the widows of very eminent men. In these the old people (generally women) must be extremely well off. The handsomest of them is Deutze’s Court for twenty old women of the Reformed Church, who have two rooms and a loft, board, firing, &c., under the direction of the very respectable family of the Deutzes. Brandt’s Court of Rest for old Lutheran women is also very pretty; but they have not, like the former, almond trees and vines in their garden, the produce of which, as a very merry-looking old woman told in Deutze’s Court, was for *all* of them. “You would not believe,” she said, “how comfortable we are.” There is also the Court of Christian Love, founded by Madame Occo, for aged Catholic women, only differing from those I have described in the plan of the

building; and there are besides a number of other establishments of the kind, which are only ordinary dwelling-houses fitted up for this purpose. For instance, the *Roosenhofje* for old Catholic women, remarkable as having existed unchanged ever since the sixteenth century, and also as showing how low the level of Amsterdam, since so much raised, was at that period. You descend several steps into the court-yard, which seems lower than the surface of the water in the next canal.

The remains of the only convent that was spared, the Court of the Beguines, seems to claim a mention here. The enclosure is all that remains of the old convent; the buildings have been replaced by houses, which with the church form a triangle enclosing an open space. This is inhabited by old and young Catholic maidens and widows, who are not bound by irrevocable vows: this is the distinctive rule of the Beguine order; but it is said that there is no example of any one having cast off the yoke she has voluntarily assumed. The government has always respected this convent. The nuns live either on their own property or by their own work; the buildings belong to the community. They are not cut off from the world; but in the evening their gate (the whole is enclosed by a ditch) is closed against men. Their church is small, and contains monuments of the famous, outrageously absurd miracle of Amsterdam, without interest except to Catholics. The pictures are celebrated, but of little value. . . . . Few foreigners will have seen what was shown to us in the directors' rooms, in the Spinning-house and Orphan-house,—the portraits of all the directors and directresses at the different eras from 1620 till towards the middle of the eighteenth century. . . . . I was never tired of looking at these groups, and could have stood for days before them. They are extremely remarkable in their bearing upon history, because they exhibit the surprising alteration that has taken place in the national physiognomy. In 1630, the Hollanders were tall, slender, and powerful, the opposite of fleshy, with spare countenances and eyes full of fire. This is the case, for instance, with a certain Major Haselaar in

one of these groups, who more than once appeased dangerous tumults among the populace and saved the city: there you have a man indeed! The Spanish garb and the long beards add to the dignity of their appearance. The women are elderly matrons, with an air of quiet goodness and purity, which happily is not yet extinct here.

But even so early as 1660, the physiognomy of the men is much changed, and far more various; still, on the whole, they have a noble expression, though many of them are inclined to corpulence. There is altogether much sense and dignity about the men of this period, but they have not the fire of their predecessors who conquered their liberties. The women of 1683 are of middle age, and cannot, therefore, be so well compared with the elderly matrons of 1630; they are handsome and noble-looking. The gentlemen of 1720 are masses of flesh, devoid of all soul—a representation confirmed by history; while those of 1660 had already laid aside their beards, the faces of the latter are as smooth as our own, and their state robes are ridiculous. Many portraits of individuals of that age prove that all, both men and women, had a heavy, common look.

Besides all these, we have seen the *Gasthuis* or Hospital, which is, perhaps, unrivalled in cleanliness, purity of air, and the attention bestowed on the sick. Whether the physicians are good, may be another question. The men and women are always separated here, and there are wards for ordinary complaints, for accidents, and for lying-in women. All these extend through two stories high, and the windows are in the upper story: they can thus be kept open without occasioning a draught, of which there is as little trace here as of the smell of a sick-room. Towards the pregnant women the hospital is only too indulgent; for although they ought not to be admitted before the sixth month, they are often allowed to enter in the fourth. The number of births, too, is very small as compared with the number of women in the house, not above two or three a week. Married women are received and nursed gratis. Unfortunate girls have to pay *six florins* for a stay of half a year!



They cannot be taken in without a certificate from the families with whom they have lived, their guardian or some other person, so that the dregs of society do not come within these walls. It is, moreover, no school where young medical men may at once learn their practice, and corrupt their morals. So long as the women are able to go about, they are required to do the work of the kitchen, laundry, &c., of the Hospital. Outside the town is the Pest-house, for malignant disorders; and in the workhouse is a Lock Hospital for women. There is, besides, the Lunatic Asylum, containing, at present, twenty-seven men and fifty-six women; altogether, there are about 700 patients under the directory. The city physicians are also consulted gratis by the poor belonging to no religious body, of whom the number is very great here; and, on exhibiting a prescription from one of these physicians, with a ticket from the inspector of the ward certifying that they are not relieved by any congregation, as they belong to none, they receive medicine gratis from the hospital dispensary. If they are members of any religious body, the physician is obliged to visit them, and the church pays for their medicine. These consultations, however, according to the account of the foreman in the dispensary, are a shocking mockery. The physician never sees those who are *very ill* and cannot come to him, but prescribes quite at random. It is said, too, that they are very ignorant; one of them was formerly a ferryman! Besides the institutions I have mentioned, the French Reformed Church, the Catholics, and the Mennonites have also orphan-houses and many asylums for the aged. The Mennonites receive old persons into their houses without distinction of creed. . . .

LEYDEN, *June 6th*, 1808.

. . . . . Brügman is a scholar of the genuine stamp, whose knowledge is not limited by the measure of other men's discoveries; but who, with his active and clear-sighted intellect, sets his aim before him and strikes out his own

path to it. I was delighted with him, and with his quick eye. He was brought up, if not born, in Groningen. I fancy that the pure Frisians have more energy than the Dutch. His first reception of me was very cold; he was annoyed, perhaps, at having a German man of affairs sent to him. But we soon got into animated conversation, and talked about all sorts of things, from the cedar to the hyssop. We conversed upon the nature and formation of this country, on which subject he said some excellent things; and he received my hypothesis, perfectly new as it is, not only without prejudice, but with approbation, and added many facts which strikingly confirm it. He informed me that the eastern side of an elevated tract which runs from Groningen to Bentheim forms the boundary of the granite, quartz, and chalk boulders, which are scattered over the whole of Northern Germany. He described to me the gigantic barrows in Drenthe, and showed me urns and antiquities brought from thence. He instructed me in the different kinds of peat-mosses to be found in these parts, among which there are some very singular varieties. He talked very interestingly, as a physician, of the local diseases, the diet of the common people: in short, I could have conversed with him very willingly for two days, instead of two hours. I am as delighted as a boy when I happen to light upon such a man; and I think he liked me too. I am to call upon him again before I leave, and he will visit me in Amsterdam.

LEYDEN, *June 7th*, 1808.

. . . . . Of the public buildings here, we have seen the old Stadthaus, two churches, and the ruins of the old Citadel. The traveller should never neglect to visit the Stadthaus of any Dutch town. Every one of them contains a treasure of old pictures. Here we saw two extremely remarkable specimens of early Flemish art, and some excellent paintings of the seventeenth century. The former are two altar-pieces which were rescued from the iconoclasts, painted on wood; one a Last Judgment by Lucas van Leyden, and

the other by his master, Cornelius van Engelbrecht. They both consist of a centre-piece with wings, which open and turn back like the doors of a cupboard. These pictures must be judged with respect to their age. It is, therefore, no wonder that in the Last Judgment, the angels especially, with their blue robes and wings, are not exactly ideal, and that the devils with their beasts' heads on apes' bodies and horrible chimerical shapes, have a most grotesque appearance. But individual portions show a great artist, who strove forwards at a time when Flemish art had as yet hardly come into existence. A man in the centre of the picture, who has just risen from the dead and on whom sentence has not yet been passed, but whose expression is one of deep sadness and rigid despair; and a very beautiful woman stretched on the ground and vainly endeavouring to retain her hold on it, while a devil is dragging her away by one foot,—are worthy of a place in Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. The colouring of Cornelius is much more beautiful than that of his pupil, but his drawing is very stiff. Mary and the other women are portraits, and their costume Flemish; in his figures you are struck by the proportions common in the early painters of the Middle Ages, but which have already given way to something more graceful in Lucas van Leyden;—the length of the body and of the very slender arms, and the remarkable narrowness of the hips. But his St. John is beautiful and dignified. . . . By far the most beautiful thing, however, is a small allegorical piece fastened on below, in which the figures are only three inches high. . . . Among them are some nuns as beautifully executed as you can imagine in any miniature painting. Indeed, the Flemish school of art took its rise in miniature painting; any one who is acquainted with ancient illuminated MSS. knows that, far back in the Middle Ages, many scattered miniature paintings are to be found, which leave nothing to be desired; and this is a true work of the kind, only on wood. This was the limit of the excellence of painting in those days. When it ventured on anything of grander scale it advanced with very uncertain steps. The best of the

modern paintings are one by Johann Lievers,—Scipio restoring the Captive Spanish Princess to her Parents; and one of the distribution of food to the citizens of Leyden after the raising of the siege on the 3d of October, 1574, in which the wan, starved faces of the women and children are given with fearful truth. . . .

*June 8th.*—This siege of Leyden is the pride of the city. But I sought in vain, in the Stadthaus, for a monument or even a portrait of the great burgomaster, Peter Van der Werf, to whose greatness of soul the merit of the defence is to be ascribed rather than to the citizens, who, long before its conclusion, had abandoned themselves to despair, because hunger and pestilence had carried off 6000 persons. It was in this Stadthaus that he put to shame the furious burghers who forced themselves, armed, into the Hall, and with threats of death demanded of him bread or the surrender of the city. He offered them the keys of his house, to see if he had any more bread, and stepped among them, saying, "If you are mad with hunger, kill me and eat me; but do not surrender the city, in pity to your children, whose freedom you would sell that you may eat." And at this very time, others of his colleagues, and a great part of the council of the *Vroedschappen*, were inclined to Spain. On his side, however, he had the commander of the troops, the brave Lord Van der Does of Nordwyk, an honourable and a rare exception among the nobles, according to the opinion of Prince William of Orange, who trusted fully in none but the burghers where the good cause was concerned. But the Lord Van der Does was also a classical scholar—a thorough Latin poet. Peter van der Werf has a monument, however, in the church of Hoogland—a tablet against one of the pillars, with a beautiful Latin inscription, and his bust, an excellent production of Verhulst. I shall bring an engraving of it with me; for the head is worthy of the man. The ignorant sexton, at my earnest request, sought about for his gravestone, and found it after much trouble! Yet his name still lives on the lips of every Leydener.

To-day we have visited the University Hall, and I have

seen the Library with Wyttenbach. The former contains the portraits of the most eminent scholars of the University, from Scaliger to Pestel. How many great names occur among them, and what remarkable countenances! The handsomest face is that of old Hemsterhuis, the ugliest, but wonderfully clever-looking, that of Boerhaave. . . .

For the sake of traditional respect, I visited Luchtman's book-shop. After a little conversation, but before he knew who I was, Mr. Luchtman was so polite as to offer to assist me in any way in his power, to get me access to things worth seeing, &c. To a learned man, Luchtman's book-shop is the most important in all Europe. We saw there a striking instance of the luxury of the Dutch with regard to books. About thirty volumes were piled up on the counter. These were copies of the classics for show,—Burmans' Ovid, Havercamp's Sallust, Gronovius' Livy, &c., in a large size and printed on beautiful paper; they would cost little less than a thousand florins, and were all destined for one amateur. There was also a Lexicon by Golius, never used, and never meant to be used. All these books are only for show, and are handed down from generation to generation. Copies for use are kept besides. . . .

THE HAGUE, *June 9th*, 1808.

. . . . . Leyden is a desolate city. Its defence was rewarded by great prosperity, and its manufactures were so flourishing, that the number of its inhabitants is said to have risen to 100,000. The general causes which have led to the decline of the Dutch manufactures have not spared the "pious Leyden," as Vondel calls the city. The circumference of the walls was greatly extended towards the north; on the south side of the city we have seen, even now, the venerable bulwarks of freedom, against which only a few bastions have been thrown up. But the part below the walls is forsaken, and the unoccupied houses have fallen into ruins, so that Leyden, like an Eastern city, dies away from the walls inwards. In one retired quarter, we saw a great heap of

ruins, where a number of houses must have been destroyed by fire, and no attempt has been made to rebuild them. You will no doubt all remember to have read in the papers of the great calamity of the 12th of January, 1807. On that day, a ship laden with gunpowder (the accounts vary from three to four cwt.), and bound for the Hague, blew up in the centre of the finest *Gracht*, owing to the scandalous carelessness of the crew, who were frying bacon on the deck. They had probably been pilfering from the cargo, and some of the powder must have been strewn upon the deck. Three hundred houses were thrown down, and a hundred and fifty persons lost their lives. Among these were the two famous scholars Lüzac and Kluyt, and a whole family of thirteen persons, where the children had just come from the Hague that day to show the parents their little grandchild. Wytténbach's house was also destroyed and his library much injured. He says that he has lost all spirit to work since then. He was sitting in a back room when he heard a frightful explosion. He and his niece looked at each other in terror: in a few seconds, all the windows and the china plates on the table cracked. They ran out into the street to see what was the matter; and as they were turning to go back again, the front of the house, which must have been rent asunder instantly but have opened gradually, fell in with a crash. Only a small part of the ruined quarter has been restored—as much as was necessary for symmetry; the rest of the space has been converted into walks planted with trees. Where the vessel lay, the banks of the canal are quite torn out. This *Gracht*, the Repenburg, I think very pretty, partly owing to its old lime-trees with their very thick foliage. Milly does not think Leyden itself a beautiful place. My old love may perhaps render me partial. I envy the Leyden professors; they seem well paid, and have a library, collections,—everything to make one forget the flesh-pots of Egypt. They are now only sixteen in number, among whom there is but one supernumerary. The theological courses may be attended gratis; the rest are dirt-cheap: for a whole course extending over several years the fees are

only thirty florins! I hear that Wytttenbach takes as much for each lecture, which is quite fair when his hearers are rich; and it is to be hoped that the large contributions of the rich are allowed to cover the deficiencies of his poorer hearers. The professors have a vacation from the beginning of July to the end of September; this, too, is pleasant, and highly important to the more eminent among them. It gives breathing time, allows the professor to interrupt his course before it becomes a mere routine, and he returns to his lectures with invigorated energies and prepared to take up subjects from a new point of view. . . . .

DORDRECHT, *June 12th*, 1808.

. . . . . The Hague was never of any importance, except as the residence of the sovereign; it has no harbour, and was certainly never intended by Providence for a commercial city, according to the idea of the Hamburg preacher, who found a physico-theological proof of the doctrine of providence, in the fact that navigable waters always flowed past great commercial cities. That it was the seat of government under the Stadtholders and during the first period of the monarchy, gave it a prosperity as fictitious as that of Berlin, for instance, before these calamitous times. Now, not only are the old hotels standing empty, which were built by the provinces for their deputies to the States-General and the States of Holland; but even the private houses no longer find tenants. Among the former, the Hotel of the city of Amsterdam is a princely edifice, such as the republics of antiquity erected for their ambassadors. The large hotel where we lodged, once crowded to excess with foreigners, had now scarcely a foreigner in it besides ourselves. In the Prince's *Gracht*, which is considered the finest street, and in which the foreign ambassadors and other persons of rank generally chose their residences in spite of its muddy canal, the grass is beginning to grow between the stones. On the space formerly occupied by the house of the last High-pensionary of Holland, M. Van de Spiegel—which was burnt

down in 1795, probably out of mere wantonness—no house has yet been built. Still, the Hague will always be resorted to as a residence by a few rich people, who seek for quiet and a pretty neighbourhood, just as the rich Romans resort to Naples and Tarentum. These will not allow the borders of the Wood, or the large park-like squares to become utterly desolate.

AMSTERDAM, *June 18th*, 1808.

. . . . . The canal voyage from the Hague to Delft, a distance of somewhat more than three miles, is one of the pleasantest in this country, particularly the part after passing the toll-bridge near Ryswyk. The land is not quite flat, and is dotted over with country seats of a superior class, many of them surrounded by plantations; but the villages lie at a distance. Delft is a comparatively small town. . . . . We visited its Old Church, whose tower leans with pleasing carelessness towards the houses on the right, which would decide me to live on the left in preference, even at double the rent. This church contains the monuments of the old Admiral Martin Van Tromp, and of Piet Hein, who began life as a fisher boy, at Delftshaven I think, and rose to be vice-admiral, captured the Spanish galleons, and like Van Tromp, died for his country. Nearly all the great Dutch admirals have died thus. So fell De Ruyter, De Witt, Van Zaan, Van Galen, Heemskerk, and a long list besides. It was not quite fair, therefore, I think, to make such a crime of it in Lord Nelson, although the practice has gone out of fashion now. These monuments are all alike; . . . . but that of Prince William I., who was murdered here in 1584, is quite different. It consists of four metal columns supporting a light canopy, with four allegorical figures, Freedom, Justice, Religion, and Valour, of really excellent workmanship, . . . . though with something of the false taste of the times. Below the canopy lies Prince William in armour, beautifully sculptured in marble; and at his feet his faithful dog. I must frankly confess, that as I have often seen portraits



of Prince William; and expected less from the monument than I found, my chief wish was to see the image of this noble animal. This dog followed and discovered the murderer, who had fled by a back door, and hidden himself under a heap of rubbish; and after the death of its master it never touched food, but died by his corpse. Once before, it had smelt out an assassin; and wakened its master, when it found that barking was of no avail, by scratching his face, and thus enabled him to save himself. I was very glad to see that it had its monument too, and that not merely because I am fond of dogs; I should like to know whether he does not really rest with his master. I almost hope so. We only remained a few hours in Delft, and left again the same evening for Rotterdam. It is a tedious journey, with scarcely anything but one large and neat village, Overschie, to break the everlasting monotony of pastures and hay-fields. At this village a canal turns off to Schiedam, and you see this rather considerable town at no great distance. Nowhere in Europe, hardly even in Lombardy, are the towns so thickly planted as in South Holland. . . .

Rotterdam is certainly a handsome city; its sixty thousand inhabitants have too little, rather than too much room. The houses of the new town are not inferior to those in the finest streets of Amsterdam, and are rather larger, as many of them, especially on the very beautiful quay called the Boontjes, have four stories, and a broader front than the buildings in Amsterdam. We were not able to see the dockyards, as the officer who gives out tickets of admission was from home. We only saw at a distance a few ships of the line in the skeleton, but more are building. They cannot be equipped here on account of a sand-bank, which makes it necessary even for coasting-vessels, if heavily laden, to unlade on lighters; but they must go down to Helvoetsluys before they can be finished. I cannot understand, therefore, why the dockyards were not originally placed at Dordrecht, where these obstacles do not exist. The statue of the learned Erasmus deserves little attention, and the square in which it stands is so filthy that you can hardly get to it to read the

inscriptions. The Orphan-house, containing 400 children, is much below that of Amsterdam in every respect, and so far from clean that you cannot fancy yourself in Holland. . . . . On Sunday we went to the Scotch Church, a more considerable building, and from which you would infer a larger congregation than the Presbyterian Church here. The English congregation was also very numerous formerly in Rotterdam, which, as is well known, was half English in the days of free trade and intercourse; many English superscriptions still remain over the shops. Unfortunately we came in a little too late to hear the beginning of the most admirable sermon, I will not merely say that I have heard for these nine years, but that any one could hear who should travel through all Germany and the north expressly to search for that needle in a bushel of hay—a really distinguished preacher. . . . . The English Episcopal Churches throughout Holland are closed: in that at Rotterdam the windows have remained broken ever since the Revolution, when the people were pleased to turn it into a stable, like the one at Utrecht, which is still half hay-warehouse, half theatre. The Rotterdam Presbyterians can be no Scotch fanatics, for they sang the Psalms to the tunes of the Established Church, but they have no organ. From thence we went into two or three Catholic Churches, where the mass was already over, to see the pictures, but found nothing at all remarkable among them. We thus heard successively two scraps from the sermons of two monks,—disgusting, stupid stuff; indeed, almost all the more respectable persons had gone out at the conclusion of the mass, and left these friars to preach for the benefit of the populace. The Catholics are very numerous in Rotterdam, still more so than here, in comparison to the size of the population. But it is hard to say what is to become of the service of their churches in the future. I have questioned a priest about it,—a very good-hearted but stupid fellow,—and hear that they have no seminaries in Holland, nor in Brabant. In the principal Reformed Church the sermon was over. Defend me from a sermon in a Dutch Reformed Church: those dominies are fearful men! No

Protestant Church that has never been wholly under the sway of fanatics, has been equally signalised by ambition carried to bloodthirstiness, by a spirit of contention and shameless arrogance. The State long ago set bounds to the power of the clergy, and now they are feeble and harmless. On the *trek-schuyts* and elsewhere we have encountered various specimens of the country clergy. They are greasy fellows, of low origin ; yet after all, not so utterly distasteful to me as our young preachers, who, when they get a cure, after an idle or dissipated life at the university, do not themselves know what they are, and from their unhappy inability to bring their feelings and conduct into conformity with their position, end by wishing to conceal and disavow it, as a cultivated Jew is too apt to do with regard to his nationality. We had now seen all we wished at Rotterdam, and hastened to Dordrecht. . . . .

But I forgot to tell you at Rotterdam, that in the principal Reformed Church we saw the monument of Vice-Admiral Witte Corneliszoon de Witt, an object of veneration to every Dane, because this admiral fell in 1568 in a battle with Wrangel, at the raising of the siege of Copenhagen. His ship sank after he had forced the ships of the Swedish admiral and vice-admiral to strike. His tomb bears an excellent Latin inscription. In this church too, rests the Lieutenant-Admiral Van Tromp, another saviour of Copenhagen, but a brutal man, and a bad citizen ; and, lastly, the Schoutbynacht Van Brakel, who forced the chain drawn across the Medway, in 1667, and opened the way to the victory of Chatham. But here, as I gaze on these monuments, the thought forces itself upon me, that after the lapse of 150 years, all the fruits of these great deeds have already passed away, and that they are as foreign to ourselves in their practical results as if they had been performed in some other quarter of the globe.

To return to Dordrecht, or Dort, as it is generally called. It is the oldest, and once took rank as the first city of Holland. It has been far outstripped by its younger competitors, but it still possesses solid wealth, and is perhaps

one of the most substantial cities in Europe;—particularly interesting to me, because the trade between Norway and Holland is chiefly carried on through this port, perhaps two-thirds of the whole. The Revolution has deprived it of its staple privileges, and the mint is now about to be removed from it, but its natural advantages and wealth are so great that on the return of peace a brilliant revival of its commerce is certain. . Not even the competition of Antwerp can neutralise these advantages; moreover, it is an established fact that the Brabanters and the foreigners settled in Antwerp have not that commercial spirit which enables the Dutch to make their way in spite of all difficulties. The town is larger than might be expected from the number of its inhabitants—only 18,000—not from decay, but because the families live comfortably in large old houses, which give the place a very different air from the other Dutch towns, more like the German imperial cities. . . .

The principal church is a superb old building, very large, and in the beautiful Gothic style, almost comparable to the Cathedral of Utrecht, though there is a wide interval between the two. The pulpit, hewn out of a single block of marble, is one of the things shown to strangers. I enquired for the grave of the De Witts, and had again the vexation of receiving but half an answer. However, I have seen the family-tomb, and the gravestone of their father, Jacob de Witt; whether the remains of his sons were deposited here, or whether they were left in the grave at the Hague, to which they were first carried after the mob had satiated their cannibalism, I could not learn. Perhaps if I had had courage to call on the only remaining member of the family, who, according to the testimony of a respectable man *not* belonging to the same political party, bears a very honourable character, and declined all the offers of place and power made him by the revolutionists (the wretches wanted to make the De Witts the patron saints of *their* liberty), I should not only have learnt this, but also seen the goblet which the States presented to Ruward Cornelis, and other relics of the family. . . .

STAVEREN, IN FRIESLAND, *July 15th, 1808.*

I had long cherished an ardent desire to visit Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe, the seats of the uncorrupted old Frisian nation. . . . . We saw [in Hoorn] a town visibly falling into decay, full of deserted houses, many of which had already crumbled to pieces near the walls,—a fate which seemed to be awaiting many more, whose roofs and windows betrayed how long they had been forsaken. The main streets, principally consisting of small one-storied houses, still retained a tolerably respectable appearance: none of the houses there had been deserted by their ruined proprietors from inability to bear the taxes, and left to any one who would take them; but closed windows and the ugly bills, “to be sold,” prove that many even of the best houses must be a burden to the proprietors. And it is undeniable that, under the existing circumstances, and in years of scarcity, the present system of imposts must bring a declining town to ruin. Tell every one in Holstein who complains of the growing taxes, that, in Holland, the people are now obliged to pay as property tax twenty-five per cent. upon the rent of houses as well as land, reckoned by an average of years—which, at the present moment, includes some better times than these,—and further, ten per cent. as assessed taxes. The rent is fixed by the tax-gatherers, if you inhabit your own house; and there are absolutely no exemptions from these burdens, even when utter indigence can be fully proved, except in the case of Leyden, in so far as the buildings have been injured by the explosion of the powder-vessel; and in this estimate the local rates are by no means included, which, not to speak of the dyke rates, amount in several towns to fifty and sixty per cent. upon these two taxes, on which they are based at a per centage. Hoorn had not begun to decline before 1795, and in former times it was wealthy; its name is glorious in history. . . . . Outside the gate there are several shady walks, crossing each other at intervals, along which beautiful summer-houses are scattered, which have, so far, survived the ruin of the town. On quitting these, you enter villages

which almost, and on the latter part of the way [to Enkhuyzen] quite join, so that the high-road is like a street. The houses here are, indeed, only of wood, with a foundation a few feet high of brick-work, in the peculiar style and neatness of North Holland, generally green, and always brilliantly painted; but small,—for the farm buildings take up very little room, and the hay, which forms the chief harvest, is stored up in barns or in hay-ricks behind the house. But the cleanliness and the tiny gardens between the road and the houses, and the frequent orchards, give these villages and the whole district a very smiling aspect. Here, too, the front-doors of the better houses are kept constantly closed, and opened only for weddings or funerals: a path paved with brick, most scrupulously scoured, leads up to a side-door which is used every day. This district is known under the name of the *Streek*, on account of the great wealth of the peasants, among whom there are said to be many fundholders, and even merchants who speculate in goods in the great cities. From ancient times, the villages of this part have had municipal privileges, several of them having been combined into a *Plattenlandstadt* (town of the flat lands), which has its Town Hall, and, what is never wanting in Holland, its orphan houses, &c., just like a proper town. This country belongs to what was anciently West Friesland, which, as a free barony, was combined into one province with the county of Holland, yet preserved its peculiar customs in many points, particularly in its internal constitution, and has continued to do so, notwithstanding all revolutions. . . . In these parts, there are no noblemen's estates with the right of administering justice\* (that they were abolished throughout Holland, in 1795, is not to the point, they never existed here); for this country did not come into the possession of the Counts of Holland until the thirteenth century, after obstinate wars, and by means of a capitulation, so that the feudal system was never introduced. For though all Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht originally belonged to the Frisians, their old institutions

\* "Adliche Güter mit Jurisdiction."

were quite lost after their conquest by the Franks in the eighth century, when all their property was confiscated and re-distributed among the king and the nobles who had served in the expedition; thus introducing universal serfdom, which gave rise, in some parts immediately, in others subsequently, through the granting of fiefs out of the royal domains, to seignorial estates with the administration of justice attached to them; and these continued to exist till very lately,—nay, still exist in some measure, though the peasants had redeemed their freedom, and serfdom had vanished, as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century. But the West Frisians in Holland maintained their personal freedom and their property, like their brothers in the many other Frisian countries which were either not at all or very partially subjugated by the destroyer, Charlemagne. At the time of the conquest in the thirteenth century, this district was either joined to the province of Friesland Proper, or separated from it only by a very narrow stream. . . .

Most of the land hereabouts is tilled by the owners. Its price varies from 200 to 1000 florins per acre. Corn is rarely met with: what little barley we saw, was already almost ripe. In this neighbourhood, a very large portion of the inhabitants are Catholic, and, I believe, very bigoted. In the consciousness of their numbers, they distinguish their houses by the sign <sup>1</sup>sts, and exhibit black crosses where a death has occurred—customs which would not be permitted in South Holland, where they are less numerous. Our driver was a very fine man, whose energy and vivacity, no less than his physiognomy, betrayed unmistakeably his pure Frisian blood. The language is, probably, quite extinct, unless it may have been preserved in some of the remote villages; for our driver told us of the inhabitants of a village, called Norddyk, not far from the town Medemblik, who, he said, were very rough, and could scarcely be understood, and always used the pronoun “thou.” It long ago struck me with surprise, that the Frisian language has the second person singular just like our low German; while in Dutch it is, and has been for centuries, wholly wanting:

hence the Dutch grammarians very unsuitably put *gy* in the place of "thou,"—a pronoun which is quite unintelligible to a Dutchman. In this respect the Dutch language stands quite alone, though in English, too, the pronoun "thou" has almost fallen into disuse. But even as early as the year 1300, it is no longer to be found in the Dutch rhyming chronicle of Melis Stoke. Of the bodily strength of these people at Norddyk, our driver gave us instances, which coincide precisely with the almost incredible statements made in our old chronicles about the early inhabitants of Dithmarsh—the more precisely because the standard by which the degree of strength is measured is of a kind to be found among all peasants, such as taming horses, dragging loaded carts, &c.

The Catholics here, as throughout Holland wherever they were numerous, were zealous adherents of the Revolution, which ensured them the upper hand, if everything were to be settled by a majority of votes, and, as the revolutionary constitution declared, all the friends of the old order of things were to be removed from the assemblies of the electors, partly by direct means, partly by the imposition of insulting oaths. Hence petty civil wars arose, since the rest of the inhabitants were just as strongly inclined to the opposite side, as they showed when the landing on the Helder, in 1799, held out a prospect of a counter-revolution. A house was pointed out to us which had belonged to a rich peasant, whom General Daendels caused to be shot after the evacuation, because he had supplied forage to the army of the English and the Prince of Orange; the sentence was executed, though his wife and brother offered a large sum of money for a commutation of the penalty. We had heard so much of the terrible enormities practised by the English in North Holland, that, knowing how many similar scenes had taken place in other wars, I made inquiries into the details, apprehensive that I should be told of some new fearful horrors. I was very much astonished to find that not an instance of plunder, to say nothing of murder or insult to women, is known here, though the army was long enough in



this neighbourhood ; on the contrary, their discipline and exact payment for all trifles as well as for large purchases, were highly extolled. Any one who knows the Duke of York will ascribe the merit of these good works to old General Abercrombie.

The town of Enkhuyzen by no means answers to the beautiful avenue which leads to it. It is still more deeply sunk than Hoorn : of great extent in the days of its prosperity, when its faithful devotion to the good cause of the States was rewarded by the ample and certain remuneration brought in by its herring and whale fisheries ; the long broad streets now only serve to bear witness to its poverty and depopulation. . . . .

AMSTERDAM, September 4th, 1808.

. . . . . The King's birth-day was celebrated last Friday. However sincerely I could join in the sentiment of the festival, from the respect with which the real goodness and pure intentions of the King have inspired me, and share in the universal joy, I would have given much to have done so in quiet as a private person. At noon, he gave audience to the diplomatic body : that means, you wait an hour for the King to have the trouble of going round the circle, and saying a few words to each. This time, however, he looked cheerful ; but I have seen him before so depressed and unhappy on a similar occasion, that one could not help suffering in sympathy with him, since it was visible in his whole air what a torment the constraint was to him, and how much he would have given to be alone. This audience was succeeded, after a few hours, by a grand dinner at the house of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and on such occasions I always feel out of my element ; for the few subjects on which I can speak are not in place, and I can say nothing on those *de bon ton*. It must be confessed that these Court assemblages present an extraordinary spectacle to anyone who is tolerably familiar with the personages and history of the times. There you see side by side, in richly embroidered

robes and conspicuous decorations, one who vehemently insisted—happily in vain—on the erection of guillotines by the French generals, and another who repaired to the English army when it landed in 1799, and drew up decrees to forward the counter-revolution; two others, in familiar conversation,—the one a violent Orangist, the other a violent Jacobin, both in office and power, and both decided enemies; apostles of liberty and equality in Court uniforms, and delighted with their Court places; tradespeople with large order-ribbons on their coats,—which gives me almost as little pleasure as the first scene I have described. I always retire very early, and yet have far more than I want of it. There are several estimable men among the diplomatic body; I believe also several clever and cultivated men, but only one with whom I can form any real friendship, and that is the Ambassador from Wirtemberg, Count Dürkheim; who, likewise, feels out of his element, as he, too, had never filled the office of ambasssador before; unfortunately he will leave Amsterdam in a short time, perhaps in a few days. While we were assembled at the palace, the common people were entertained with the illumination and the play. The theatre was thrown open to the public, which has never been done here before, but this part of the entertainment was like to have ended badly. To prevent quarrels at the door, which are apt to end in homicide here, since the Dutch mob when irritated have a frightful quiet fury, *gens d'armes* were stationed at the theatre, but with orders to use no violence. Perhaps the people guessed this, perhaps it was the natural consequence of half measures; however that may be, it soon came to blows on their side, and the sentinels were disarmed by the populace, which cannot as yet grow reconciled to the soldiers. But even in this state of excitement, the people were tamed immediately and reduced to order, by the friendly exhortations of a popular man, who got up and spoke at this moment; and then made it a point of honour to be more quiet, attentive, and decorous than is often the case in the pit of a theatre. But it is at all times a remarkable trait in the character of

the Dutch populace, that they are extremely polite if you speak to them politely, and in a sociable manner. You will never receive an uncivil answer if you accost the roughest fellow with your hand on your hat, and with a friendly *Jongelje*: he will walk a considerable distance to show you the way, &c., without being asked to do so, and without expecting any recompense. A *Waale*, as the Dutch call any foreigner whose language does not belong to the German stock, particularly if he wears conspicuously fine clothes and if he speaks with an air of superiority, may probably experience the much decried rudeness of the Dutch to its full extent; but I have never met with it, and am sure that I never shall. . . .

I must tell you a fact, which proves that the energy of the old Dutch benevolence is still stronger than the pressure or the frivolity of the times. A Catholic upholsterer has erected and endowed, without any ostentation, a new Court for sixteen old couples. He has done it so quietly, that it has not been mentioned in the papers; nor is there even any inscription on the building; and, probably, there are not five hundred persons in Amsterdam who know anything of it. When, therefore, I am compelled to hear shallow young foreign dandies speak slightly of the Dutch, or to hear orthodox Dutch of the Reformed Church vituperate the Catholics,—and among these Protestants, it is very common to pour out curses and damnation in a really furious and bloodthirsty spirit, at once on the Pope, all Catholics, the liberal Remonstrants, the Mennonites, and all whom they call philosophers—I am strangely moved. For those young foreigners one can feel nothing but contempt; but towards the latter class the feeling is much more painful; because they are in other respects estimable people, and one cannot bear to apply to them the story of the Pharisee in the Gospel. A Reformed zealot is as bad as a Dominican: and how many estimable victims of delusion have there not been, in all ages, among those monks?

Your faithful N.

AMSTERDAM, *September 16th*, 1808.

. . . . . A horrible circumstance has occurred here, at Amersfort, of which the papers cannot speak. A troop of guards, who were in garrison there, having been treated on the King's birthday and got beastly drunk, abandoned themselves to excesses on the highroad near the town, of which respectable women have been the unhappy victims, and some men who defended them lost their lives. The King, whose sorrow must have been increased by the circumstance that the festival of his birthday should have been the ill-omened occasion of these horrors, has behaved admirably and ordered severe retribution to be administered; the violence of his first burst of grief does him still more credit. It seems as if fate were determined to persecute him with annoyance at every step. I try to convince the Dutch, too many of whom misunderstand him, that there is a great difference between his behaviour on this occasion, and that of the Government in the winter of 1787, when during the sacking of the patriots' houses at Bois-le-Duc, the soldiers perpetrated many more enormities of all kinds for three days, and were stimulated to do so by their general and officers. It has been proved before a court of justice what, and how great those enormities were; but so blind is political fanaticism here, that an Orangist, a very good friend of mine, maintained to me that they were not to be compared with what has just happened. In this political wrong-headedness, which palliates *everything* done by your own faction, and *never* forgives, no nation equals the Dutch; and this holds good with undiminished vehemence of events that occurred centuries ago. Call Oldenbarnevelt's death a murder, execrate that of the De Witts, and a genuine "Prince's man" flies at you as if you were the most malignant Jacobin. A venerable old man, a downright pattern of integrity, told me, in the gentlest voice, that all the misfortunes of Holland had arisen from the Stadtholder having refused, in 1787, to sacrifice the four heads which the leaders of his party had offered him—on account of the imprison-

ment of the Princess at Schoonhoven, who was quite prepared for death, as the infatuation of the patriot leaders was well known! I wish heartily that the Dutch troops may really evacuate Holstein, as is generally believed here, and if we must choose between the two, should prefer that the French troops might remain in Rendsburg.

Farewell to you all.

AMSTERDAM, *October 7th*, 1808.

. . . . . Some time ago a circumstance occurred which led to the King's granting me a private audience at Utrecht. . . . Had it not lasted so desperately long, it would not have been uninteresting to me to be a dumb listener.\* For, up to this time, I had only known the military tone of the present French Court by report; the narrower circle round the King's person is extremely decorous, and quite what it ought to be. But here were the Court Marshal and a few officers, all native Frenchmen; and, certainly, the conversation I listened to, makes many things credible; it was (everybody will understand what I mean by the term, though none of us knows it by experience) a guard-room talk. The King has retained very few French about his person, and is continually diminishing their number; he surrounds himself exclusively with Dutch. He began with the administration of his house; for the former, to indemnify themselves for their stay in this tiresome country, stole like so many ravens; the Dutch, with whom he has replaced them, and who fill the highest posts, honestly save him every stiver they can in their contracts. Their predecessors ordered at random all sorts of expensive articles for the decoration of the palace, and without making any agreement as to price. . . . The audience with the King rewarded me for this insufferable waiting. He looked very ill, and was evidently scarcely able to walk up and down the room with me; some very unpleasant things had occurred, and he had been much

\* Niebuhr had to wait four hours in the ante-chamber.

vexed. But he was in a noble frame of mind; and the more his appearance reminded me, at every look, that he could hardly live much longer, and his whole conversation bore witness to the honesty with which he endeavoured to prepare for another world and posterity, the more I was affected; he himself was quite moved and extremely friendly. . . . I was invited to a dinner given at a tavern by Mollerus, the Minister of Religion, to Roël and General Janssens, the Minister of War. Our dinner was very frugal, and the conversation very interesting. . . . I returned to town with Janssens. . . . He is the well-known brave Governor of the Cape, after the peace of Amiens, and its defender against Sir David Baird. He yielded to a superior force, but with honour. It must have been painful to him to speak of this colony, his favourite child, since the hope of regaining it is so weak, and the consciousness is so sad, that even if Holland could recover this possession, she is too exhausted to furnish the immense sums which would be required to make this colony really valuable. He himself estimates the expenses at 5,000,000 florins for the first year: they would, indeed, afterwards annually decrease; but a long series of years must elapse before the colony could pay its own expenses. To England, he said, the Cape was but of negative importance; namely, that it might not serve as a dépôt for troops against India; moreover, she would never give herself the trouble to raise the colony to the condition it was capable of attaining. It was very agreeable to me to hear him talk utterly without prejudice or chimeras of what might be made of the Cape, on which subject visionary schemers here have made most extravagant assertions, and in some cases with such sincerity that, like M. Van H., they wasted great sums in mercantile establishments after the peace. He, however, recognised the impossibility of ever rendering the great Karroo plains arable (by the way, I am just reading Humboldt's "Views of Nature," and am surprised that he has forgotten to compare these with the Llanos of South America, and yet they are their only counterpart); and the great difficulties arising everywhere from

the want of water, and the unfortunate circumstance that the banks of the rivers are a great height above the usual surface of the streams in their deeply-furrowed beds; and, lastly, from the want of harbours along the south-east coasts; so that he himself allows that a European cultivation of the soil, and a European peopling of the Cape, could *never* be looked for; that only isolated spots can ever be settled, and that the arid tracts, covered only during the rainy season with vegetation, can never be useful, except as winter pastures. The immense size of the farms has, therefore, a very good reason; for at a distance from Cape-town, the husbandman is necessarily limited to cattle-breeding, because the transport of corn over-land would be far too expensive. Some of the pastures, however, are unfit for use during the heat, and others during the winter; and thus a change is necessary. The most important products of the Cape, he said, would always remain fine wool and wine. The number of sheep in the colony was enormous, a million; but among these there were only 8000 of a superior breed; the rest were African hairy sheep. However, the Spanish breed not only retained its qualities in perfection, but the cross-breeds produced excellent wool. He had taken measures which, if they had been continued, would, in the course of years, have converted all the sheep of the colony either into pure merinos or very fine mongrel races. It will be a pity if this be not done. He stated that a more or less perfect Madeira wine could be produced everywhere; but the indolence of the inhabitants rendered it extremely difficult to introduce improvements depending upon their own industry. He depicted the Caffres,—whose King, Gaika, he had visited in his own country, and with whom he concluded a treaty,—as a very fine race of men. . . . With such conversation we passed the time till we came to Loenen, a very pretty village, half-way to the city. We halted there a little, and our conversation turned from Africa to Europe. When I spoke of the beauty of the village, my worthy companion poured out a torrent of sorrowful lamentations over the condition of the country. “Alas,” he said, “we who know how

poverty is spreading through these dwellings, which look indeed still smiling, but whose beauty is kept up by weary struggles ; how the existence of the country is only prolonged like that of a hollow tree, which continues to vegetate through the bark alone ; we who have known everything in the full vigour of real prosperity, of which you have only seen the outside,—we Dutch can take no pleasure in this shell, which is continually being undermined more and more, and must infallibly sink into ruins. We see the calamity coming ; we see that nothing can avert it, and that everything must give way with a crash, because, with us, the revenues of the State are not, as in other countries, drawn from the national capital ; but inversely, the greater part of the capital is founded on the revenues, since it only consists in the capital value of the dividends which the State pays.” This led us into a melancholy conversation on the good old times, the calamity which has befallen the land, the course of Providence, and the contemptibleness of the men who occupied the posts where they should have resisted the storm, when it broke over Europe. We agreed in our judgments, for although formerly a sincere Orangist, my companion was no blind partisan. The good features of the Orange party, with the exception of a few nobles, was their great integrity ; no slight excellence ! but it was too anti-republican. The Opposition—I am not speaking of the later revolutionists—had no fixed aims, and a great number of worthless men had mixed themselves up with it ; and thus the ruin of the country was inevitable.

Farewell, and think of your faithful N.

AMSTERDAM, *October 16th*, 1808.

. . . . . They [the Janssens] speak very highly of the Moravian mission, and Janssen favoured it very much. It is a pity that all these missions, perhaps even the wisest—that of the Jesuits in Paraguay, bring the savages into a state which must be unnatural to them, since a constant supply of neophytes is needed to prevent the mission settlements from



dying out, by the preponderance of deaths over births. Work, beyond what is necessary for the acquisition of immediate sustenance, seems to be fatal to the savage in Africa as in America, where he is suddenly put to it, after habits of idleness have been rooted in the race for thousands of years. Hence it is certainly chimerical to hope that a balance between the births and deaths may be brought about in the sugar-islands by good treatment of the negro slaves. Savages are like those birds which die in a cage, simply for want of freedom. To me this fact speaks more strongly than anything else, except the horrors of the passage from Africa, against the slave trade; but it would militate also against colonies on the footing of Sierra Leone, even against missions, and all attempts at civilisation. . . .

AMSTERDAM, *October 23rd*, 1808.

. . . . . We spend the Saturday evenings almost always at the house of the old banker F., where my poor Milly cannot enjoy herself much, because the conversation is almost always in Dutch, of which she understands very little. The ladies of the more considerable families in Amsterdam, if their minds are not positively distorted by ill-chosen reading, are really absolutely destitute of mental cultivation,—without a suspicion, even, that such a thing exists; they are more polished in their manners than the wife of a small shopkeeper, but the range of their ideas is quite as limited, and they take no interest in anything that lies beyond their own immediate sphere. Most of the men, too, are without any independent judgment of their own. They are the slaves of their prejudices, and these prejudices are so sacred, that you cannot run counter to them in the slightest degree without giving offence. The worst is, that these people want to force their truths upon others; else we should never get into disputes, for when a man has lost the power of testing his notions, I avoid his prejudices as I should a dog given to biting. Old F. has displayed such unexampled liberality towards the Danish government on every occasion,

that I still retain a feeling of gratitude towards him, and bear with a great deal from him; besides, in doing business with me, he has conceived such a liking for me, and such an opinion for my banking talents, that he told me lately, twenty years ago, he would have been very glad to take me into partnership. Still, I cannot avoid occasional disputes with him, which always arise from his unhappy Calvinistic bigotry. From the earliest times to the present day, whenever she has been free, the Dutch Reformed Church has straightway become tyrannical, and has never deserved any particular respect, either for the spirit or good sense of her teachers. . . . Our conversation often turns upon, or rather, the old man often turns it forcibly upon the Catholic religion, the monks, &c. For since trade has been so dull, he thinks of nothing but the Apocalypse, Bengel's and Jung's expositions of it, and another equally celebrated exposition by a "dominie" at Deventer; of which, however, unfortunately only the first part has been published, because his confinement in a mad-house has prevented the author from finishing the second; meanwhile, this first part announces that the Pope shall be hung in 1808, and Jung is said to have foretold the Congress at Erfurt. I am quite of the same mind with Hume, that the Calvinistic religion, which everywhere, in England, in Holland, in Geneva, has erected her scaffolds no less than the Inquisition,—which does not possess one of the merits of the Catholic Church, such as the monks who devote themselves to the care of those afflicted with pestilential diseases, &c.—is far more hateful to me than the Catholic Church itself, whose adherents are, to say the least, no worse. But the fury of prejudice is carried so far in this country, that, when talking with a *regtsinniger*,\* it is not advisable to name the great poet Vondel, the only poet who is an honour to the nation. And he is indeed an immortal honour to it, for he was as simple and loving as a child, and though educated as an Anabaptist, went over in later years to the Romish Church, and throughout his life combated the

\* Orthodox.

tyranny of the Calvinists, who at that time brought Oldenbarnevelt to the scaffold, with all the fury of an Archilochus. He never could believe that those who thought differently from himself would perish everlastingly: certainly not his own grandfather, though the latter had apostatised from the Romish Church; he was, he said, quite too good and pious. On the other hand, we happened a short time ago to be speaking of Bilderdyk, in the opinion of the Dutch their Anacreon, but more truly an imitator of Gleim and J. G. Jacobi. (A Dutch Anacreon is in itself a somewhat comic idea. In the best of his pieces there occurs a line of which the literal translation is: "The *rascal* (Cupid) walked out of the room.") I confessed that I could not acquire any great liking for him, and was the less able to understand how he should be called the poet of the Graces, and his poems should be published in a form for the toilet table, as I had met with two among them so disgustingly-voluptuous, that I was willing to hope, in Christian charity, that no Dutch lady would read them. "As to that, I can assure you, sir," replied the old man, "that M. Bilderdyk is a very religious and *regtsinniger* man, and I cannot believe that he would have written anything of the kind you mention; I think you have read the book with prejudice; undoubtedly our ladies read his poems." I should like to see V.\* in company with these Calvinists. At first, they would get on admirably together, so long as they confined themselves to rejoicing over the prospect of seeing the Catholic religion extirpated with fire and sword; but each party would soon find out what a two-edged sword his confederate was wielding, and then there would be a fine scene! "For it must be allowed," say the Calvinists, "that the Catholics are less damnable than the Arminians." (These are much what are *now* called in England Independents.†) In short, in the Dutch Calvinists of the present day, quite as much as the Presbyterians of Scotland and New England, you find again the same sect, which, in the seventeenth century, attacked the Established Church of England with

\* No doubt Voss.

† Probably Niebuhr confounds them with the Wesleyan Methodists.

ignorant fury, in order to reign in her stead; and whose cruelty, intolerance, and coarseness excited such deep indignation in Milton, although he had long travelled on the same road with them.

That the Apocalypse should engage the attention of the unlearned and bigoted at the present time, is not surprising. But the result to which this leads may be seen in the Separatists of Wirtemberg; and if we must confess that the government of that country is unquestionably justified in adopting severe measures against a rabble, who, puffed up with spiritual pride, set at naught all civil regulations, and are deaf to all argument, who will obey no authority, and refuse to pay taxes because the 'millenium has begun, and the King Jesus has appeared upon earth in the person of the Emperor,—we must also perhaps allow that the government had good reason to resist the spread of the Anabaptists and Image-breakers in the sixteenth century. It must be acknowledged however, that their resistance was carried into effect by execrable means, and deserved the rebellion which produced such magnificent results for the Netherlands. The fact is, I think, that all religious warfare renders men blind and cruel; that every sect carries the germs of tyranny in its bosom, and that all opposition to tyranny, involving the sacrifice of sensual things, has an elevating and ennobling influence;—which will not, however, be understood by any *regtsinniger* to whom the truth is shut up in a formula, and who is persuaded of his *personal* election.

AMSTERDAM, October 30th, 1808.

During the celebrated September fair of Amsterdam (which, however, seemed to us more insignificant than an ordinary little German fair), the Exhibition of Dutch Works of Art was opened, which the King has set on foot in imitation of the Paris Exhibitions, and in the laudable hope of raising art from its present deep depression to its former splendour. I will hope that emulation and the promised prizes may have some of the

anticipated effects ; meanwhile, experience and the nature of the case are against it, and I ought to have written *wish* instead of *hope*. The natives, nearly all of whom make some pretensions to connoisseurship because there were great artists among their forefathers, have flocked in crowds to visit this Exhibition, and praise many of the pictures ; we, and other impartial foreigners have been able to find very little that is hopeful in it, excepting a few really pretty portraits, and came home only confirmed in our conviction that art is defunct here, and will not revive. The young aspirants to art follow in the track of the so undeservedly renowned French school—paint large historical pictures with the figures from twelve to thirty inches high, standing in theatrical attitudes, and apparently converted into stone, while the light is that of an ordinary room on a very cloudy day. From the Exhibition Hall we passed into another, where some old pictures hang, a bitter shame to the present day. We had seen most of them before at the Hague, whence the whole collection seems to have been brought. . . . . Not long ago, an Italian, whom we see occasionally, and who has long been a resident here, took us to the house of his cousin, the merchant Brentano, whose cabinet of pictures far surpasses all the other private collections of Amsterdam. To other men, collecting pictures is a favourite taste, on which they spend a good deal of money, but to him it is his life. Speaking most strictly, he has no other society than that of his dear artists ; for he never invites any one to his table, but places a couple of his pictures before him, and gazes at them during his frugal meal, just as another man would refresh himself by conversation. According to the Amsterdam standard—which is certainly very high indeed—he is not very rich, and his cabinet is princely ; this does not, however, hurt his credit—partly because pictures are here regarded as a treasure, like jewels or hard cash, and partly because he has absolutely no other luxury. One maid-servant, scarcely more than a child, opened the front-door to us. But the exquisitely beautiful hall in which his finest pictures are hung, cost him 20,000 florins ; it is richly

decorated with bas-reliefs and arabesques. The artist was an Italian of great originality, who lived in the house for years, and many of the arabesques are relics of his droll humour. In one corner of the ceiling, there is a caricature of a Dutch painter, whose little respect for Italian art had raised his ire; the Dutchman has an enormous round peruke, and is intently engaged in drawing a pig which stands before him as a model. . . . I have plagued you all too often with catalogues of pictures, and will not, therefore, fall into the most grievous of errors,—repeating an acknowledged fault. But you must suffer me to speak of one or two pieces. There is a Madonna and Child here by Giovanni Bellini, a picture of the most elevated character, and extremely remarkable on account of the extraordinary impression it produces from being painted in the primitive manner, quite without shadow. It has been attempted not merely to deny, but to demonstrate the utter impossibility of the perfection attributed to Greek painting, because the Greeks painted without shadow; and it is very conceivable how this opinion should be held by those who have formed their taste on the great Flemish masters, who, like Rembrandt for instance, produce the most extraordinary effects by means of deep shadow. And I think it is true as far as regards portraits and historical pictures, which represent real life, but not of ideal subjects, and the Greeks rarely painted any others. In these, experience shows how little essential is this improvement introduced by modern art; and may it not sometimes even be injurious? The most intellectual of the Flemish masters who painted daily life, De Witt, returned—evidently intentionally—very nearly to this primitive mode. I have often asked what was the most striking difference between the works of the earliest masters, Giotto, Cimabue, &c., and those of the sixteenth century; for I was convinced that it would be possible to derive an idea of Greek painting from the former, because the art had not then undergone any transformation: but those who had had the good fortune to see the extant productions of those masters, could never give me a clear answer. I feel sure that the essential distinc-

tion lay, first, in the absence of shadow; next, in the symbolical rather than imitative arrangement of the figures; lastly, in the mode of mixing the colours. Is oil-painting to be preferred, in every case, to the more ancient method? . . .

For your sake, I pass over at least fifty pictures of which I should like to speak, and will now quit this topic, doubtless very tedious to you, dear father, to tell you that our letters from Prussia still keep us in the greatest uncertainty as to the length of our stay. . . . Meanwhile, however, I continue to make use of every opportunity for enlarging my knowledge of this country, and have lately found a very favourable opening for acquiring a well-defined idea of the constitution of the Bank of Amsterdam, which had previously been very obscure to me, and of which, probably, no one out of the country has an entirely accurate conception. But who will be ready to believe that this institution is now thoroughly degenerate and perverted? As little will it be credited that those who know this to be the case, dare not say so, in the presence of others who are but superficially acquainted with the Bank. However, the fact is certainly as I tell you, and the consequences of it have begun to make themselves felt. Many years ago, the Government put their hand into the treasure-chamber; and, although it is said that this deficit was made up, the management of the whole has grown so faulty and corrupt, that it is less and less available, and must be altered in course of time. The act of spoliation I have referred to, was effected through the burgomaster; for although the old Hollanders took such ridiculous precautions against pilfering, that each burgomaster was allowed to tread the sacred vaults only once during his term of office, he could command the commissioners to withdraw millions; and the tyrannical power of the burgomasters had become so great, through the aristocracy of families, that the commissioners dared not utter a murmur against them. So much for Büsch's security of the Bank in a republic! The burgomasters had little or no salary, but honourable and lucrative minor offices for themselves, and lucrative, though not brilliant places to give away among their sons and

nephews. The nephew of a burgomaster, now himself an old boy, who has grown grey as a clerk in the Bank, was lately heard to complain bitterly in recollection that, once upon a time, the place of an *Aanplakeers* (poster of placards), which yielded 1000 ducats, was taken from him to be bestowed on the cousin of another burgomaster: a modest ambition! His situation, formerly worth 4000 florins, all accruing from emoluments, is now reduced in value two-thirds, owing to the stagnation of business; and this may give you some idea of what Amsterdam is now, compared with what it was. Farewell, and remember

Your faithful N.

AMSTERDAM, *November 26th*, 1808.

. . . . . It is almost unnecessary to recapitulate the honourable characteristics of the genuine Dutch,—their quiet unremitting industry, order and punctuality, and a rooted habit of conformity to justice and the laws. This character and its results are now more than ever a delightful spectacle to the foreigner who is not accustomed to see a whole people in this condition. Nor does the foreigner find himself oppressed by national pride, or embarrassed by presumption: just as little does wealth obtrude itself ostentatiously upon him. But when his sojourn is prolonged, when his curiosity about this remarkable country is satisfied, and he looks about for social intercourse, he will soon discover, that he must and will remain foreign to the nation and they to him, even were he to spend a lifetime here. I now know a great number of persons, and among them some very estimable men, but neither in their conversation or writings have I met with one striking thought or acute observation, not one really good piece of wit, scarcely a tolerable joke. I really doubt very much whether there is a single original mind in the whole country, unless it be in Friesland, where everything assumes a different colour. This certainly cannot be owing to the climate, for that was the same years ago, when the brains were very different.



It may be asserted that there is a universal want of genius, inventive power, taste and love of knowledge, and that this has been the case for more than a century. A sort of intellectual indolence which insinuates itself from the earliest childhood; a miserable content with the very narrow circle in which each one moves; and mutual indifference between classes and individuals diffuse a spiritual death throughout the country. All opinions are prejudices, and to test them either by personal observation, or attentive reflection, is not to be thought of: a real system of thought and opinions, such as everyone may possess on a larger or smaller scale in proportion to his wants, I have not found in any of my acquaintance; but, I have found, on the contrary, in many instances, the most unaccountable contrast between old party-opinions, utterly obsolete in their very essence, and other ideas in fundamental contradiction to them. It is really, however, no wonder that, with the exception of a few who have received a liberal education, Dutchmen of the mercantile classes should be uncultivated and incapable of forming an independent judgment. For though his apprenticeship might train a young merchant to indefatigable industry, it degraded him to the position of a servant, and stifled all feeling. He was received into a counting-house at the age of twelve or thirteen, and was obliged henceforward to content himself for life with what he had learnt before that age. His first year was spent entirely in menial occupations; he ran errands, carried turf, lighted the fires, &c. In the second, he was allowed to copy letters, bills, &c.; but the whole seven years of apprenticeship passed away without any mental culture, and without a leisure hour in the day. Most of the principal men on the Exchange were men of the very lowest origin, who had not spent any of their money in the cultivation of their minds: very few Dutchmen ever crossed the frontiers of Holland; and as their intellectual faculties had been so completely crippled in youth, they never felt the want of higher objects of thought in later life. They did indeed choose a political party; but it was not till after I had witnessed very striking examples, that I could bring myself

to believe how blindly they chose it,—how utterly without a notion of what they really desired, they would engage in furious contentions with each other. The infatuation of party-hatred has in various ways contributed, not only to the ruin of the State, but to the decline of the nation. The Union was in fact a constitution, which could be held together only by the power of a dictator or the authority of a great man; but the Dutch had had no such great man for more than a century. The spirit of freedom and energy had long since died out; and institutions, which ought to have been beneficial, produced suffering. No one acted,—scarcely even took the trouble to make up his own mind; and this was enough to spoil any fine intellect, and to make each man a tyrant in his own little circle, which was exactly what took place. Every man still remembers how he used to tremble before the burgomasters. In this state of affairs some strove to give the Stadtholder sovereign power, as the only means of deliverance; and, perhaps, they were right; for at all events some change was necessary, though the utter sacrifice of their ancient freedom was a horrible thought. You will not easily bring an Orangist to confess that this was what they aimed at; but it is not difficult to worm the secret out of him. Those of the other faction wished to go to the other extreme, but no party had the courage to declare its object openly; and hence the disturbances of 1787 became as ridiculous as they were ruinous, for the avowed objects of the struggle are not worth examination. Many on both sides still cherish their old hatred; and it is worthy of note, that an out-and-out Orangist will reproach a former patriot with his conduct in 1787, rather than in 1795, although so many acted in a thoroughly revolutionary spirit at the latter date. In this respect they are just like the *émigrés*; and the consciousness of their mutual implacability held back many of the old patriots in 1779, who would then willingly have brought about a counter-revolution, which the Orangists would have had neither courage nor resolution to effect.

One unpleasant trait in many of the Dutch is their want of a sense of decorum and external propriety. It is as true

as it sounds incredible, that the office of the city nightman in Amsterdam—which was certainly a sinecure as far as the work was concerned, and was worth seven thousand florins—and likewise the analogous office of inspector of the purification of a certain part of the houses, were reserved for the relations of the burgomasters, who formed a sort of patrician class; and this so utterly without a suspicion of indecorum, that particular places in the churches were assigned to these offices. This is certainly an innocent thing; and a State in which, on the one hand, people are not ashamed to accept a nasty but lucrative office, and, on the other, discharge public duties with the greatest disinterestedness and integrity, is better off than a State where people would be ashamed of the former, and would not be ashamed of thoughtless or criminal unfaithfulness in their offices; but this state of things could not continue when once the old edifice had been shaken. Meanwhile the history of Holland, during the period from 1748 to 1781, affords an extremely memorable proof against all adherents of despotism,—that if a country is without great men, capable of giving it an internal impulse, and retains the blessing of external peace, together with honesty in the administration and the courts of justice,—a condition of anarchy, and a government carried on almost without ideas, is perhaps the most favourable to the prosperity of the nation. This period is famous for the extraordinary increase of the national wealth, and the prosperity of the finances. But when you learn that the government profited so little by the years of good fortune, that they constantly refused all proposals for public works, in order always to enjoy a surplus of money; though these works—as for example, the Catwyk Canal—were of such urgent necessity, that it has since been needful to undertake them under the most pressing scarcity of money;—that they not only suffered the fleet to fall into utter decay, but passively looked on while all their harbours of war were being choked up by mud and rendered useless;—when you see this, you are convinced that the State had outlived its faculties, and that the government had sunk down to the

narrow range of ideas of a petty citizen. Altogether, you might express the then, and indeed the present state of the nation, by saying, that if, according to Plato's image, the souls of the highest class should be composed of gold, and those of the succeeding classes of less noble metals in proportion to their relative standing, the nobler metals would be almost entirely wanting here; and hence those of lower quality would have stepped into their places. Nowhere have I met with so respectable a burgher class, and the common people are excellent in their way; nowhere will you find such honest and confidential servants; moreover, they are still quite distinguished by their costume from their superiors, and make no pretensions to transgress the limits of their order.

The perfect indifference of the Dutch to the fate of other nations forms a singular contrast to their great benevolence, which is not alone active in behalf of their own countrymen, but is often manifested in collections for the unfortunate in other countries. When, in former days, hundreds of poor Germans were notoriously kidnapped here, and delivered to the company of slave-dealers, their fate excited absolutely no compassion; and the very man, who gave away thousands of florins for charitable objects, would have remained utterly indifferent to the most cruel treatment of the *Muffen*.\* They regard nations in the mass with similar apathy; and I have myself heard a man, who in all matters of business displays not merely strict integrity but a very rare disinterestedness, literally declare that he could not comprehend how any one could feel an interest in a foreign nation,—unless he were interested in their funds! All sympathy is measured off in degrees here, which are regulated precisely according to the often accidental standard of the personal interest of each individual. The man who holds Danish bonds will have heard of the destruction of Copenhagen with dismay and sympathy; but I fear much that, if he were able to sell them afterwards, the fate of Denmark would no longer affect him very deeply. A Dutchman will never

\* Foreigners, especially Germans, a contemptuous word.

enquire into the institutions and circumstances of foreign States; and hence it is, that they have often lost immensely by their foreign loans. In this indifference, also, I find in part the reason why they have no historians; for the ancient history, even of one's own country, resembles that of a foreign land. The Frieslanders have made several attempts, some of them very meritorious, to carry out and publish investigations into their own ancient history; but even Friesland is counted as a foreign country in Amsterdam, and all these attempts have been received with such indifference that their authors have been compelled to relinquish them.

The Arminians form an exception to the general Dutch character. This free-thinking and long severely oppressed sect, which is mortally hated by the orthodox Reformed Church, and whose original crime consisted in denying that an elect person could never forfeit eternal blessings by blasphemies and crime, and that infants dying before they could commit actual sin were predestinated to eternal damnation,—this sect forms, as it were, a completely different nation in the midst of the Reformed Church; and among them, many features from the fairest times of the early republic have been preserved. Among them, you still find very strong feelings and generous emotions, not calculated upon the price current of your effects. Moreover, all that is honourable to Holland in her literature is the production of this little flock, from Grotius down to the not despicable historian Stuart. It would have been a blessing if this pre-eminence had atoned to them for their exclusion from all civil offices; for unfortunately the exasperation produced by the cruelty with which they had been treated for 180 years, drove many of them into dangerous and delusive paths. The Mennonites, also an oppressed body, have had no compensation but their comparative preponderance in wealth.

AMSTERDAM, *January 5th*, 1809.

. . . . . Of ennui I have enough ; for besides the receptions and balls at Court, there are frequently tea-parties here of more than a hundred persons, where all sit down to cards after a time ; and your poor son, dearest father, with a few more, precisely of those with whom he is not on a level on any other occasion, have to stand out as idle and despairing spectators ; then there are dinners, &c. On all these occasions, the lack of conversation is great ; the number of subjects to which people have limited themselves by a tacit compact is extremely small, and so barren that you exhaust them to the last drop long before the end of the winter ; in short, the conversation is just what it must be when people do not choose to talk about anything beyond the news of the day, and are equally resolved not to speak a word of what is really news ; and literature is banished entirely. On the latter point I have found the French wonderfully changed for some years past. They formerly reckoned it a kind of moral obligation, not simply to be acquainted with their classical writers, but to learn them by heart ; to be able to recite long passages from the poets, and to show some powers of criticism. Now, the generation is everywhere coming forward whose education was contemporary with the period of the Revolution, and their reading is inconceivably limited. They do not like to betray this, and still talk about their classical writers, according to the tone which they have picked up from the cultivated men of an earlier period ; but they carefully avoid a critical discussion, and with good reason, for their assumed acquaintance with literature rests entirely upon hearsay, with the exception of theatrical pieces. In former times, I have often passed a few hours pleasantly in conversation with Frenchmen on the analysis of a play, or an historical work ; and the knowledge and correct appreciation of their literature was often the basis of a pleasant connection which would otherwise have been impossible. But no conversation can take root which is founded upon such trivialities, as, for instance, that "*Racine est un poète harmo-*

nieux ;"—"*que Corneille se ressent un peu de son siècle ;*"—"*que les étrangers font tort à Voltaire en l'accusant d'être peu exact.*" This last commonplace I am tired of answering ; and take more pleasure in controverting the literary Jeremiads which have been brought into fashion by the Abbé Geoffroy and other literati among the public functionaries, and which are quite a novel phenomenon to me *in conversation*. For, to hear people bewailing the unspeakable mischief which the impious Voltaire and the profligate Diderot have done by their writings, when, you may be assured, that they read what the former has written under the impulse of his caprice, and the latter, with a too accurate acquaintance with the corruptions of his age, and never read one of our authors ; to hear how they declare it a wholesome and necessary measure that the state should prescribe or permit to each, according to his circumstances, what he ought and may be allowed to read,—affords matter for much reflection, and makes one conceive the possibility of solving a problem which has always been a puzzle to me ; namely, how it was possible that in Rome, so early as the second century, the classical writers, with the exception of a few poets, ceased to be universally read, and how an admirable literature does so little to avert barbarism, that even the few classical authors which remained in the hands of the public no longer produced any effect. As for the French philosophers, who held the influence of writings upon their readers to be as necessary as any mechanical effect, their punishment is deserved. . . .

The members of the legislative body, . . . are not, on the average, to be compared to the members of the Council of State, among whom there are some excellent men of affairs. The number of offices for which competent men have to be found is altogether large, compared to the population of the country, and one can well understand,—though it certainly detracts from the dignity of the assembly which is to be considered as representing the nation,—that people are content to fill it with upright men of some consideration as citizens, who are not competent or not inclined to take administrative offices. There is perfect freedom of discussion in this

Assembly, the more so as the result of the votes is never published, so that the rejection of a proposal does not compromise the Government: the body is, however, of a very subordinate importance, because it can only deliberate upon the projects laid before it, and has no initiative; and because, further, it is only assembled for a short time, and receives an immense multitude of projects of law to sanction. Those which they have had to discuss in the present sitting embrace the civil and criminal codes, and the laws respecting the forms of judicial proceedings, on which they have already concluded their discussions, as well as on the financial measures; and now they are about to decree the introduction of the so-called metrical system of weights and measures. This last measure belongs to that system which sacrifices all consideration for the convenience of the subjects to the unity of survey, and I am sorry to see that nothing is now likely to prevent its adoption.

AMSTERDAM, *February 8th*, 1809.

..... Throughout Germany, Holland seems to be regarded as an inexhaustible fountain of money, always gushing out, and capable of filling as many channels in the shape of loans as people choose to draw from it. The truth is far too palpable to find credence; for the truth is, that undoubtedly every year new loans are possible, until a national bankruptcy shall have come to pass, inasmuch as some instalments of former loans to foreign States are paid every year, and many families still continue to lay by money; but that the sum-total arising from both these sources scarcely amounts, I should think, to nine millions of florins, and that the State requires above twenty millions of new loans every year, in order to carry on its affairs even in the most penurious manner; finally, that the extraordinary resources, by which this deficiency has hitherto been concealed, are now dried up:—*this* is a truth which any acute observer out of Holland might discover without requiring the testimony of an eye-



witness, and of which the most ample reasonings would not convince obstinate folly. Who indeed can fail to understand the impoverishment of Holland, where two millions of human beings have to raise more than fifty, indeed nearly sixty millions of florins per annum, as their ordinary taxation; and this no longer by means of a property-tax, but by taxes on houses, land, rent, and an endless multitude of other imposts which reduce the working man to absolute beggary, impoverish the man of moderate means, and are a trifle only to the wealthy? It is said that the rich man pays indirectly; but up to the moment when the ruined family come upon the poor-rates, this is not true. It has already well-nigh reached the point that there are only rich men and beggars left; the middle-classes, and even the number of those who earn a scanty subsistence by their labour, is diminishing frightfully; for the wages of day labourers, for instance, have not risen at all, while rent, the prices of salt, bread, meat, beer, brandy, &c., have risen immensely on account of the duties. In the country, the labouring classes still find some employment, though the competition is too great, and the hard masters prescribe their own conditions; here, there is absolutely no work to be found. A very trustworthy man assures me that in this city, which certainly cannot contain much above 220,000 inhabitants, there are 110,000 paupers to be partially or wholly maintained. This number has increased 30,000 within a year; the number of physicians for the poor has also been increased from four to sixteen; and if national bankruptcy occurs one of these days, then four-fifths of the fundholders will be reduced to beggary likewise, and there will no longer be any one able to give relief to the poor, and all the capital of the hospitals, charitable institutions, &c., will be lost. With such a prospect, it kindles one's indignation doubly to perceive the visible increase of luxury, and the numerous new equipages; and the gaiety which is now at its height becomes doubly revolting.

The devastation caused by the floods is frightful. From the frontiers of Cleves, on the one side, to the mouth of the

Yssel in the Zuyder Zee, on the other, the whole of that fruitful country, the most beautiful alluvial soil lying between the Leek, the Rhine, and the Maas, and along the southern bank of the last stream as far as Dordrecht, has been laid under water,—a district containing *at least* 60,000 inhabitants, nearly the whole of whom have lost their *all*. It is very doubtful whether one of the finest portions of it, the Alblasserwaard, through which we drove from Dordrecht to Gouda, can ever be recovered, and it is believed that the land can only be saved by means of a herculean undertaking, the cost of which exceeds calculation; twenty million florins would be far too low an estimate,—I should think fifty millions would be nearer the mark. The King had proposed this plan long ago, but the nobles of Guelders, through whose estates the new beds for the rivers must have been cut, dissuaded him from it; on which account he accuses them, though not by name, in a very remarkable bulletin, of being the authors of the calamity. This has been said in a moment of passion; but they may be justly reproached with having taken advantage of the privilege of inspecting their own dykes, to neglect their duty. The King has behaved admirably; he went in a boat through the midst of the flood, in which ice-floes of several acres in extent were driving about, to a village, which no reward could induce the terrified boatmen to attempt to reach, in order to save the inhabitants who had preferred remaining behind on the roof to freeze and starve, rather than forsake their cattle so long as any of them remained alive. His example shamed and stimulated others. Both on this and on another occasion he put his life in the greatest danger. The town of Gorcum, in which a whirlpool had already begun to form, has been saved by his presence. He, who in his palace never feels well but in a temperature which is almost suffocating to a healthy man, remained on the dyke sixteen hours on foot, on horseback, or in a carriage in the fearful hurricane of the 31st; and that he has borne this is a strong testimony to the emotion he felt. He has uttered to the nation the significant words that he had never felt so deeply,

as in that horrible night, that unity and independence were the first conditions of their existence. Many villages are so completely destroyed that scarcely a trace of them will be visible when the water subsides. In many places, whole families have been annihilated, and there are none who have not some loss to deplore. But enough of this wretched subject.

Only two roads are open to us—either to go, by way of Dordrecht, to Dutch Brabant and Düsseldorf, or across the Zuyder Zee to Lemmer, through Friesland, Oldenburg, and Bremen. The latter will be very bad, but if it is not utterly impassable we shall prefer it. I shall willingly visit the honest Frieslanders once more; and it will, moreover, spare twenty-five leagues, and justify our circuit to Holstein. Farewell all of you.

Your faithful N.

## **POLITICAL FRAGMENTS.**



## POLITICAL FRAGMENTS.

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### ON IRELAND.\*

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THE conquest of Ireland was completed in the last years of Queen Elizabeth. Her successor found an exhausted nation, that had been forsaken by its allies, many times betrayed by its leaders, and almost always misguided, now ready to submit to new laws ; an end to fruitless devastation was the universal wish, and the means by which all innovations might be introduced without resistance.

Truly, Ireland had need of new laws and new institutions. The English pale included five or six small districts around the metropolis ; and it was a true proverb, "Beyond the pale, beyond the law." All the rest of the country was a prey to anarchy ; the towns wretched ; the country divided into large districts under the sovereign power of chieftains who were at feud with each other, who neither exercised nor received justice, between themselves, nor towards their subjects. But these subjects were no serfs ; they had even a full right of property in partnership in the village domains.

Unhappily, however, King James was one of those *mediocre* men who think it possible to press the most unlike nations into the same forms, and to assimilate them to each other through these forms. Accustomed to those which they see

\* This Essay appears to have been written during Niebuhr's residence in Copenhagen, about the year 1804 or 1805, but was first printed in his *Nachgelassene Schriften* in 1842.—See the *Nach. Schrift.* p. 404.

around them, such men vainly imagine that similar forms would be just under all circumstances, and would bring all things to the same condition as in the country where they prevail ; such men destroy, as far as possible, everything which cannot be fitted into these forms, but they have no power to implant the germs of active self-development. These new laws might easily have acquired strength through custom, had not all the existing institutions, which through usage and nationality retained vigour, been accounted as bad, and fit only to be swept away. It was simply attempted to execute a copy of the English institutions, which was expected to effect by degrees a thorough transformation ; and, to this end, King James destroyed, or at least attempted to destroy, property, language, and every trace of national laws and usages. Much did really die out, but the innovations did not take root.

It were, perhaps, a difficult case of conscience to decide whether the resistance of Ireland to Queen Elizabeth could be called rebellion. If it were so, the guilt rested upon the leaders ; and, if they were under feudal obligations, their lands might be justly liable to confiscation. But not so the common people ; for, among the Celtic nations, feudal law has never properly existed, and the husbandman was actually the proprietor of his share of the common lands. The English commissioners, alike ignorant of the language and the laws, presumed that the chieftains were the *sole* proprietors. Where they made confiscations, they alienated all the landed property in a district of many square miles ; where they granted amnesties and conferred fiefs in the name of the king, they transferred to the favoured person, as his exclusive property, all the estates in the district of which he had been the chieftain. That they had made a mistake was not discovered till some years later.

It was probably, however, a wilful mistake ; for they wanted to make short work, and a few years were to convert Ireland into a second England. The new language was introduced as legal, with all the forms of administration into the newly-

erected provinces ; the old national laws were set aside, and their secret, voluntary observance forbidden on pain of death ; the old costume was prohibited ; the villages destroyed and turned into open plains ; and, above all, in the north, in Ulster, the old inhabitants were expelled from large districts, and numerous colonies were planted, which, as they enjoyed great privileges, became very flourishing.

The parliament was constituted so that, notwithstanding a miserable shadow of representation, it was quite in the power of the king : moreover, the king had the initiative of all laws. This, however, would not have aggrieved the Irish much, had not the formalities of the English jurisprudence, administered in a foreign language, oppressed them so greatly. A Protestant rule, and the confiscation of the ecclesiastical revenues were equally galling.

It is incomprehensible, and very note-worthy, that Hume should call this odious and shortsighted proceeding of the king the brightest glory of his reign : so seldom do even great historians see clearly, and examine into, what belongs to internal administration. It is also very remarkable that he, mild as a man,—as a philosopher, regards with approbation a plan which could only be carried into effect by the dispersion, the extermination, and the misery of the ancient inhabitants, whose sole crime consisted in speaking a foreign language, having ruder manners, and being very poor, because hereby a state of things was to be introduced which was more agreeable to his æsthetic feelings. I think a consistent philosopher ought to drown all rickety children, and leave all the badly wounded to perish, that nothing may offend his eyes.

To the ejected, oppressed Irish, the future prosperity of their country for the enjoyment of foreigners, and such amends for their present sorrows as might accrue therefrom to their descendants in after centuries through the amalgamation of the two nations, was a poor consolation for their own misery, and the daily insults to their feelings.

For many years they remained quiet. The outbreak of



the civil dissensions in England, when King Charles was compelled to summon the celebrated Long Parliament, gave the signal for a general rising. The Irish massacre followed in the winter of 1640. The foreign Protestant settlers were suddenly attacked in all quarters and put to the sword; more than 40,000 lost their lives. All the colonies in Ulster were destroyed. Dublin was with difficulty maintained.

Too ill armed to reduce fortresses; undisciplined, commanded by men who had been constrained to put themselves at their head, or proved themselves unfit to carry out a thorough revolution, the insurgents maintained for years an indecisive, bloody, and desolating war against the English viceroy, whom the Parliament would not, and the king could not support. At length, driven to extremities, the latter resolved to make terms with the insurgents. The Protestant fanaticism would not allow him to avail himself of their assistance in England, but he alleviated Ireland's misery. He was regarded with gratitude in Ireland, and had faithful servants there among the natives and Catholics, when the tribunal of his subjects condemned him to death.

Cromwell required war for the army when all England had submitted to him, and Scotland was subjugated. The parliament had never recognised the king's treaty; it pointed out to the people the duty of avenging the Protestant massacre. Cromwell conducted his praying host across St. George's Channel, as if to a war of the martyrs; and the Irish were threefold enemies, as Papists, as rebels, and as royalists.

The Protestant Irish fought by the side of the Catholics, under the leadership of the Duke, then Earl, of Ormond. Resistance was unavailing; the struggle united the horrors of religious and civil warfare. Exhaustion put a limit to the slaughter.

Cromwell would have preferred to see the whole nation exterminated. Many were sold as slaves in the sugar-islands, the cultivation of which was then beginning; many English prisoners were also sold thither by him,—an atrocity unknown

even in the Sullan war in Rome. It was his serious purpose to expel the native Irish in a body from the three provinces, and to settle them in Connaught, which was large enough to contain their now diminished numbers. The land thus vacant he intended to bestow on the republican Protestants of his army, and the inhabitants of New England,—zealous Puritans, who with difficulty avoided complying with his imperious command, to leave the land they had just brought under culture, and choose a new home.

The sagacity and consistency of this shocking plan it is impossible to deny. It was based on Hesiod's old prudential maxim: "He who kills the father is a fool if he leaves the son alive." Had the plan been carried out, the stream of emigration would have flowed thither, instead of towards North America; the United States would never have come into existence; but whether the island, filled with Puritans and malcontents, would not, long ere now, have rent asunder its connection with England, is a question whose discussion would not be without interest. Cromwell's lieutenants did not carry out this plan themselves; but nearly the same result was effected by the almost universal confiscations, which even befell many upon whom confiscated estates had been bestowed by the previous Governments. Large districts were sold; a great number of estates were given to the army as rewards.

After the restoration of Charles II., the ruined Irish, who had suffered in his cause, flocked around his throne, imploring the restoration of their possessions. The king (among whose virtues sympathy for those who had sacrificed themselves to his house was by no means conspicuous) clearly saw that justice in this case would be dangerous. Great numbers of Cromwell's soldiers had settled in Ireland; and since the restoration of the king, and the disbanding of the revolutionary army, they had migrated thither in hordes. The Government had only a few bad troops to oppose to a number of veterans, whose officers were in their midst. The despoiled sufferers were put off with promises; the soldiers who had received

grants were induced by artifices to resign a part of their enormous acquisitions: moreover, years rolled on, and the death of many of the emigrants, unmarried, left their fiefs vacant. This gave rise to the Act of Settlement, which, if I am not mistaken, only restored about one fifth of the confiscated estates, and confirmed the new proprietors in the possession of the rest.

One of the first proceedings of the Parliament which James II. called together in Dublin in 1689, when nothing was left to him but the once so despised Irish crown, was the repeal of this Act. The old proprietors did in fact partially regain possession of their estates, during the short period of the Catholic sway. But, after the battle of the Boyne, the Act of Settlement returned into full force, and the outlawed adherents of the old king lost their property by fresh confiscations. These were brought to an end by the capitulation of Limerick, which gave those who had borne arms for King James II. the privilege of leaving the country, and serving their master without losing their right of property,—a measure which composed the internal commotions.

After the Revolution, Ireland scarcely numbered a million of inhabitants, and their misery was indescribable. The land swarmed with bands of robbers, formed of the country-people who had been utterly ruined. Tillage was at an end; cattle-breeding alone yielded some profit; no manufactures were in existence. It seems that the natural result of the great reforms of King James I. had been to leave the country still more miserable, after the lapse of ninety years, than they had found it.

Ireland remained in a wretched and poverty-stricken condition, far on into the eighteenth century. The harsh laws under Queen Anne and George I., which placed the trade of Ireland quite on the footing of narrowly restricted colonies,—prohibited the export of cloth, and forbade the direct exportation of salted meat to the West Indies; the hindrance to all national progress, arising from the absence of the

wealthiest proprietors (descendants of English feudal vassals); and the consequent drain of ready cash from the country, were insufficient to prevent an extraordinary multiplication of its numbers by a nation accustomed to severe privations, planted on a fruitful soil, and in which families of from eight to twelve children are by no means uncommon, notwithstanding that, for a century after the capitulation of Limerick, an immense number yearly enlisted in the armies of France or Spain, and that many emigrated to America. It is estimated that the emigration to France drew off a million of men capable of bearing arms in the course of the century succeeding the capitulation of Limerick. The legality of Irishmen serving in the French army had been recognised by the treaty; moreover, the Government were not sorry to see subjects whom they feared, arrayed against them in the open field. It was the Irish regiments that gained the battle of Fontenoy. Besides, the Government tolerated, and were obliged to tolerate the education of the Catholic clergy in French and Spanish seminaries, whereby the nation became continually more and more estranged from its rulers. England derived scarcely any advantage from Ireland: her hereditary foe, the double advantage of threatening that country, and drawing forces from it. The cultivation of flax and the manufacture of linen were introduced during the period of the deepest misery, about the year 1695, by the exertions of a single patriot in Parliament. It became Ireland's best resource; and, in the North, where it was first prosecuted with zealous industry by Scottish colonists, the towns acquired wealth and self-respect. The distress of the country at large was so great about the year 1730, that Swift in bitter indignation proposed that, in order to free the Government from the anxiety caused by the rapid increase of the Irish Catholics, and above all to spare innocent creatures the misery of a wretched existence, a proportion of the Catholic children should be slain.

It is well known that, by the infamous laws of that time, no Catholic could acquire or inherit landed property, nor

possess a house worth more than £500, nor carry any arms. It is also well known how yearly festivities, processions with cockades, and insults from the mob, reminded the Catholics of the days on which their forefathers had lost their rights and their possessions.

Nevertheless, it was not the Catholics who first rose to shake off their yoke; it was the Protestants, almost all of English or Scottish descent,—colonists, whose ancestors had brought the system of confiscation into the country.

The Protestants oppressed the original nation; but they had been already long regarded as foreigners by the British, and they had really assimilated very greatly to the native Irish, though they spoke English, and did not understand a word of the ancient language which still prevails in the remoter country districts. A portion of these, namely, those in Ulster, were Dissenters, and oppressed by the dominant Church: all, however, found England's commercial laws intolerable, and agreed, that it was no longer possible to submit to the arrogance of the British Parliament when it thought fit to confer laws upon Ireland; nor to the continuance of the Poyning's Act, whereby all bills, introduced into the Irish Parliament, must be previously approved by the British Privy Council.

The regular troops had been withdrawn from Ireland during the first years of the North American revolutionary war, and sent across the ocean. In 1779, Ireland, now defenceless, was threatened by the united fleet under D'Orvilliers with a great number of troops on board. The inhabitants, Protestant and Catholic, voluntarily took up arms under the Earl of Charlemont; the English ministry had not the means of defending Ireland against an enemy, and at the same time keeping her in unarmed subjection: they were obliged to shew confidence, and redress the most pressing grievances. The resolution with which the volunteers took up arms, prevented the landing of the enemy; and the most oppressive of the commercial laws were repealed. But the concessions made, were granted with

evident hesitation, and without thanks for the generosity of the injured nation. The Irish retained their weapons; they did not misuse them; but, as the Government refused to grant the most reasonable demands, Ireland afforded no further resources, though it did not indeed go over to the enemy: and, after some years, England was compelled to concede, without thereby attaching Ireland to herself, what, given freely three years sooner, would have inspired enthusiasm, and placed all the energies of the country at her disposal, while she was in the midst of a most perilous war.

The Protestants took the lead in everything, and they alone benefited by the hardly-won political privileges, though the repeal of the commercial restrictions was of equal advantage to the natives; thus it seems that the Anglicising process, and the changes wrought in the composition of the Irish nation, had failed to procure more obedient subjects to the ruling race.

From this date, commenced the struggle of the Catholics to obtain civil rights,—a struggle, of which so late as the year 1782, there was as yet no indication. They had gradually obtained a considerable amount of property, and acquired consideration in spite of the tyrannical laws which had now been partially repealed, and had long since been practically deprived of much of their power by the general feeling. At that time, before the French Revolution (which has everywhere surrounded all reforms with obstacles, till at length the intoxication of its noxious fumes has evaporated), they might have been restored to equal rights without the slightest difficulty; but the adherents of the dominant Anglican Church still dreaded the unforgotten claims of the plundered: centuries are insufficient to efface the memory of legal spoliation. Besides, they wished to keep the power in their own hands, just as it was among themselves confined to a few men, of harsh character, and blind to all higher interests.

The most infamously tyrannical laws had been already repealed by degrees since 1770 or 1780; and, one by one,

alleviations and privileges had been granted which were not unimportant. But it was never done with good will, and without such an admixture of expressions and minor regulations as blighted all good effects. The new benefits were received, as extorted advantages, without gratitude, and none of the new insults, which always accompanied their bestowal, were forgiven.

The French Revolution spoilt everything. The Protestant Dissenters of Ulster (it has been mentioned more than once, that these were the descendants and successors of King James's Scottish colonists) were the *first* to set on foot the Society of United Irishmen, at Belfast, in 1791. The Catholics, relying on legal help from the Government, for a long time took little part in it. It would take too long to relate how, in consequence of most wretchedly ill-judged measures, half resolutions, and cruelties, this Society found means to propagate itself to so fearful an extent as it ultimately reached. Such was the case, however; and in May, 1798, almost the whole nation was involved in the conspiracy, and armed with hundreds of thousands of pikes and many thousands of muskets.

In order to punish the disturbed districts, soldiers were quartered upon the inhabitants, and their devastations rivalled those of the French. Many hot-headed persons, nay, even Protestants of the dominant Church, had joined the Society; many of the best among the youth breathed vengeance for their persecuted nation.

In July, 1798, the new viceroy, Lord Cornwallis, proclaimed a general amnesty for all who had not been arrested; and the latter received no severer punishment than exile. In a few weeks, all laid down their arms, though the French had landed at Killala. Lord Cornwallis checked the excesses of the soldiers, and had the *courage* to order the execution of a Protestant volunteer, who, of his own accord, had shot a suspicious-looking Irishman.

Before the Union, and since the Union, promises have been given whose fulfilment has been prevented by the

influence of the Irish members of the Established Church. The country is beginning to ferment again, and the Irish legion—a perpetual source of uneasiness to the English Government—is lying at Brest. England is obliged to keep a numerous army constantly on foot in the neighbour island; and, owing to the ever-present consciousness of the unatoned injuries she has inflicted, can draw little advantage from its brave national troops,—less than she fain would do.

The contributions of Ireland, since the Union, to the collective requirements of the State, are small, and yet too heavy for a country which does not keep pace with Great Britain in outstripping the growth of her national necessities. The greatest advantage of the Union to England, so far, has been the diminution of the danger that Ireland might put her energies at the disposal of the enemy; and this is caused principally by the yet unextinguished hopes of the Catholics, the better part of whom, too, hate Buonaparte with an intensity proportionate to the violence of their republican fanaticism a few years ago. But the old connection of the Irish with France is still no less fraught with danger than their very pardonable national hatred,—a passion as vehement and as blind as jealousy. The very warmth of temperament, however, which renders the insulted Irishman dangerous, makes it easy to win him over, and to obtain the only secure guarantee of fidelity which can be obtained from a nation not utterly contemptible, namely, hearty and thorough reconciliation and union, not through a forced assimilation, but through common struggles for a common interest, through common dangers surmounted, and honours enjoyed.

But if England do not alter her conduct, if she grant with coldness and delay, putting off from month to month what she can well afford to give, and what only interferes with the tyranny of individuals, Ireland may still be hers for years, but cannot be so for ever; and the loss of this country will be the death-blow, not only to the greatness, but even to the existence of England.



And how important the vigorous prosperity of Ireland would be to the general welfare of the monarchy,—how easily it might be promoted, is proved, among other things, by the progress of the linen manufacture, which has nearly trebled since 1782, and has risen since 1798 from about thirty-five million to forty-five million yards, notwithstanding the Rebellion and the indescribable misery thence arising.

The means of obviating all danger are numerous and easy, but they must not be applied in a mere common-place, mechanical manner; above all, the Irish to whom Burke and Swift belonged must neither be hated nor despised.

THE  
DANGER OF INTRODUCING NEW INSTITUTIONS  
WITHOUT DUE PREPARATION.\*

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. . . . . We must hope that this wild tumult will be terminated without further consequences, and then these events will be among the most instructive of modern history, as they prove by an experiment never tried before, that even the English constitution, if suddenly conferred upon a nation hitherto unaccustomed to self-government, will not guard it from the dangers of demagogues and Jacobinism. What short-sighted and foolish men censure as abuses in the British constitution, are, on the contrary, the essential conditions of its beneficial working,—the close connection between the Government and Parliament, and the direction of parliamentary business by the ministers, who, however, have not a chance of remaining in office after they have lost the respect and confidence of the nation. The variety of the electoral qualifications, the monarchical and aristocratic influence over so many elections while the majority are absolutely free, the entire absence of anything theatrical in the debates, are all excellences which cannot be transplanted, but must spring up spontaneously. True, there is an Upper House in Sicily, and it would not sanction Jacobinical bills. But how is it to maintain its ground against a democratic Lower House? And how, at all events, is a civil war to be averted, should the two Houses array themselves against each other with the passionate impetuosity of their native land? . . . .

\* Extracted from an article on Sicily in "The Prussian Correspondent," April, 1813. See *Nachgelassene Schriften*, p. 372.

Of all possible forms of a constitution, that of a democratical representation of the so-called people is the very worst; far worse than an assembly of the whole people, unless the latter be such as existed in the last days of Athens, and at Geneva. And of all expedients, there is none involving heavier responsibility than that of introducing entirely novel constitutions, even with the best intentions. . . .

THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.\*

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. . . . . The history of the gradual development of the constitution and liberty of Great Britain, since the reign of Queen Anne, when it retrograded somewhat from the point to which it had been raised by the Revolution of 1688, would give us a picture of the collective wisdom and virtue of a nation, which is unequalled by any other portion of history. Without the repeal or alteration of a single institution, the possession of active freedom has gradually extended throughout the nation, both in amount, and in the number of its participants; and not a year passes in which the vagueness of former law and precedent is not interpreted by new laws to the advantage of liberty.

It is the peculiar and inimitable excellence of the British legislation, that no law can anticipate the progress of public opinion. Thus, the laws find the way prepared for them, and millions are eager to carry them into execution; thus, they do not come before the public as a dead mass of words which study alone can render intelligible, but the public is already awaiting them, and comes to meet them half way. This method certainly makes it necessary, in the case of all great measures, that the majority of the people should be brought to concur in their favour; and a generation may elapse before the prejudices of the majority can be silenced. But if this have been accomplished, and a strong feeling on the side of the new measures have been formed, it is no longer

\* Extracted from an article in "The Prussian Correspondent," for the 19th January, 1814, on the Catholic Question in Ireland. See the *Nachgelassene Schriften*, p. 348.

in the power of the administration, as is proved by the instance of the Catholics, to resist the force of public opinion.

Those men who are free from prejudice will, unquestionably, discern what is desirable and advantageous, sooner than the multitude, which cleaves more closely to its old customs: and the freer the nation, the stronger are its prejudices. But if the clearer vision of the more sagacious minority becomes law ere it is called for by the general voice, it takes the shape of external restraint, and does not mingle with the deep-rooted national habits. . . .

## PITT.\*



. . . . . Pitt guided the helm of the State under such extraordinary circumstances, that for years he was forced to make the general welfare take the place of law ; and hence his enemies were enabled to persuade the majority of his contemporaries (for the majority never see beyond the surface of the moment), into believing that he was a Tory, and that it was hypocrisy when he came forward as an advocate for the extension of liberty. He was, however, a pure Whig, and was most deeply in earnest in the plan for parliamentary reform which he brought forward in 1785, no less than in his speeches for the abolition of the slave-trade, and in his efforts on behalf of the Irish Catholics. But, because he was so wise, and his stormy life fell in that terrible age when an epidemic insanity had seized upon men's minds, he perceived, earlier than almost anyone else, the unfitness of the time for a change which would otherwise have been most wholesome and innocent,—and gave it up. He was convinced that the Jacobinical love of theorising and forming projects, could be checked only by an iron adherence to what had an historical existence ;—until the period of insanity should have exhausted itself. His plan for parliamentary reform may, and no doubt some day when the fulness of time is come, will be adopted as a finished production of wisdom and justice.

Pitt never bowed to any other verdict than the sentence

\* Extracted from the same Essay as the preceding. See *Nachgelassene Schriften*, p. 355.

of his own reason and conscience. Nothing is more intolerable to a revolutionary faction than to find themselves, from such a cause, unable to lead their adversary into a false position. Where great depth of mind exists, apparent contradictions spring from one and the same root; but they are contradictions only to the shallow observer whose opinion is dependent on words, without the faculty of insight. Pitt, like Burke, abhorred Jacobinism, even as it appeared in the first National Assembly; because these statesmen, formed by historical study and practical acquaintance with public life, descried in it, from the first, the opening of the gates of hell to destruction,—to arbitrary arrangements devoid of inward coherence, and the direct road to despotism. For the spirit of Jacobinism is the dream of an abstract reasonableness in political institutions, which are therefore to be forced upon a nation in defiance of all existing rights, contrary to the inclination of the vast majority, and contrary to the national habits. That which revolts against this is the true spirit of freedom. In a hereditary strict monarchy, reposing upon inclination, affection, and custom, it is the spirit of freedom which springs up to defend it to the last against a constitution-artist. . . . .

There are times in which two opposite parties are each contending for the truth, without the possibility of reconciliation; and such times are the most horrible of all. Thus it has been in religious wars, when one party desires to maintain its old faith, and the other to establish the principle of liberty of conscience: another instance is the struggle in Scotland, between the Jacobites and the Whigs. Succeeding generations contemplate with anguished hearts, and equal admiration, the heroes and martyrs of both confessions. As a rule, no party is absolutely bad, except that which would fain be tyrant and slave at once. . . . .

THE HAND OF GOD IN PRUSSIA'S DELIVERANCE  
FROM A FOREIGN YOKE.\*

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. . . . . To the three chief causes for gratitude to God in this victory, which are treated in the sermon, we should certainly have wished to add several others, had it been our office to speak within consecrated walls. We are thankful to our friend for his open and unqualified utterance of the great truth, that our deliverance is the *immediate* work of God. We, for our own part, do not hesitate to say openly, that the immediate protection and guidance of His hand from on high, have never been more clearly visible in any age of the world's history than in the period through which we have just passed. When the need was the sorest, when all human wisdom and strength had failed, this deliverance appeared. We might call it an advent of the Comforter, not as an incarnation, but in Divine dispensations and inspiration. Who is there that can see nothing beyond mere physical phenomena in the early frost, which annihilated the whole French army; in the hurricane of the 16th of October, which rendered it impossible to extinguish the fire of Moscow; in the storms of rain at the end of August? Have not events, which, according to all former experience, would have filled us with perplexity, contributed undeniably to our salvation? Was it not clear in innumerable instances, that Napoleon was smitten with blindness? Had not his iron firmness, his lightning glance, and his power of resolve visibly

\* From an Article in "The Prussian Correspondent," for Dec. 20th., 1813, on a Thanksgiving Sermon preached after the battle of Leipsic. See the *Nachgelassene Schriften*, p. 326.



departed from him,—qualities which had laid the foundation of his power, and which no one to whom truth is sacred, can refuse to recognise as *great* in him? Was all this accident? Or was it the work of the Lord, who pitied the people which cried unto Him, who repented Him of what He had done and said, I will plague Israel no more, but I will deliver him from the hand of the oppressor?

And can the spirit which animates our nation, and its noblest part, the army, find its origin or explanation in earthly motives? Is it according to human experience, that energy should grow with exhaustion, contempt of wealth with poverty? What has transformed these peasants, who, but a year ago, bowed unresistingly beneath ill-treatment, into heroes such as the history of our wars has never yet known? Who has breathed into our whole army, great and small, that virtue of which all Germany could, perhaps, exhibit only exceptional instances,—that patience, disinterestedness, modesty, self-renunciation, charity, and discipline?

In all these things God has visibly appeared in our midst. It is a new revelation; and woe unto them who do not believe! In an age, when so much that once brought blessing to men has died out from its very root, how many an anxious heart has long prayed in secret for a new revelation attested by signs and wonders, for the appearance of the promised Comforter, the Spirit of God! It has come in our times, and doubly woe unto us if we do not see and acknowledge it!

That this has come to pass in our lives,—that when the restoration of pious faith was impossible without actual experience, this experience has been granted in our deliverance,—that we now know historically (which is the blessing of every fresh revelation) what we had lost the capacity for believing after the manner of our forefathers (and faith can only be historical),—for all these blessings we would fain have heard our friend express the gratitude which we know that he bears in his heart. . . .

EXTRACTS FROM A MS. SKETCH OF  
A FUNDAMENTAL LAW FOR THE NETHERLANDS:  
WRITTEN IN 1814.\*

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... . Liberty exists, where neither the caprices and passions of an individual, nor of the majority of an assembly can make laws without incurring the opposition of public opinion expressed by a legally constituted authority, sufficiently powerful to curb them ;—where no arbitrary authority can encroach upon the liberty or the property of the citizens ;—where public opinion can exclude from office and influence men of blemished reputation, and sooner or later depose incompetent functionaries from their office ;—where there exist legal means, which cannot be frustrated by the authorities, of keeping a watch upon the functionaries, and denouncing before the tribunals those guilty of malpractices or negligence ;—where the right of saying and publishing anything for the truth of which you are ready to answer in a court of justice, is formally recognised and sacredly maintained.

It is the power of decreeing without restraint whatever you choose, that constitutes despotism. A representative assembly, exercising without any opposition an unlimited legislative power, founded on a pretended delegation of the general will, is the most arbitrary and the most capricious of all species of tyranny.

The divine right of all government is not a chimera, nor an arrogant claim ; for the social state is neither the arbitrary choice of man, nor invented by him. Constitutional

\* See vol. i., p. 383.

liberty is opposed to the abuse of the powers of government in the hands of the mortals called to exercise it.

The end and the duties of the Government are, to constrain its subjects to be just towards each other; to prevent and punish crimes; to encourage and cultivate the virtues; to develop the moral forces and the character of the nation, and to combat vice; to maintain the independence of the State; to uphold its dignity abroad; to respect liberty. As to the augmentation of the national wealth, that should be left to the good sense and activity which liberty will infallibly develop under a good government.

Liberty exists where public opinion can constrain the Government to fulfil its duties, and where, on the other side, in times of popular infatuation, the Government can maintain a wise course intact, in spite of public opinion—(as in England during the French Revolution).

If the Government be nominated by popular elections, especially if these are frequently renewed, it is the sport of the passions of the moment. Where one or more bodies do not exist as organs of public opinion, the Government can brave it.

To govern, to make laws for a vast society, is an extremely difficult art, requiring a talent rarely found. Those only who possess this talent themselves in some degree, and whose judgment has been formed by experience, are capable of recognising it in others. Intellect, eloquence, force of character, nay, virtue, are not enough to imply its existence; yet even the well-intentioned part of the nation can see nothing beyond these qualities, while the majority may be captivated by the arts of popular adulation and sedition. The great men of England have never been nominated by popular elections until they had already acquired considerable celebrity; they have been introduced into Parliament by the nomination of a borough under aristocratic influence.

With the exception of a small number of men of rare genius, it is the knowledge and experience of a public functionary that constitute a legislator. The segregation of the public servants, and their exclusion from the legislature,

was the highest pitch of revolutionary madness, and one of the causes of the follies of the Constituent Assembly; and some mode of representation should be chosen, which would facilitate the introduction of this class into the legislative assembly.

The extreme prosperity of the Netherlands has been, above all, owing to the circumstance that each commune and each corporation has governed itself according to the maxims accumulated by long experience, and without any violent innovations.

A constitution only possesses stability in so far as the several powers are considered as property which cannot be infringed except by free consent, and after a settled conviction of the necessity of the case; never by general reasonings.

Immutable political laws have never existed, and wherever it has been attempted to make such laws, the nation has been stifled. In England, where the fundamental laws have not been changed apparently since the glorious Revolution, the difference between the constitution as it was established then, and as it exists now, is prodigious. A constitution based upon extreme principles conducts infallibly to despotism. That is the most favourable to the duration of liberty, which, by offering a long series of degrees to the establishment of democracy or absolute monarchical power, leaves future generations many steps to pass before they can precipitate themselves into either of these gulfs. . . .

INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS.\*

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. . . . . War and victory are only means of enforcing right; they create no right which did not exist before. An unjust victory and the conditions of peace extorted by it are, and remain to eternity, illegal, except in so far as the maintenance of the existing universal political relations may render their acknowledgment and observance the lesser of two evils. Thus, the cessions and treaties extorted by France [under Napoleon] were illegal; and as it was a duty to God and man to annihilate the order of things introduced by them, so they neither superseded existing rights nor created new ones.

Hence, we are not speaking of any rights which the Allies have acquired by conquest, but of rights which their conquests rendered capable of being enforced; and we protest against censures proceeding from a dishonest confounding of these two things.

We can no more regard wars in the light of divine judgments, than duels; certain as it may be, that God often strengthens a weak arm when raised in a righteous cause, for he does not do so if it please not his counsels.

He, who combats for the right and against the wrong, conquers, when victorious, whatever would be awarded to him by a tribunal not bound to the letter: for he has overstepped the domain of the letter, which reigns within the sphere of positive law. But from the necessity of extorting your rights springs a twofold right—that of indemnifying yourself for your losses and toils, and that of providing for

\* From Niebuhr's Essay, entitled, "The Rights of Prussia against the Court of Saxony." See vol. i., p. 385.

your future security, lest the enemy from whom you have wrung justice should take advantage of a favourable opportunity to revenge himself. Where the ground of warfare is not a contested right but a mortal enmity, there arise between Governments, as in antiquity between peoples, wars of extermination, resembling a struggle for life and death between man and man.

The extent of a victor's lawful powers cannot be determined by any letter, they can only be referred to the tribunal of conscience. Where the original wrong was slight, the enmity not deeply seated, the contest a mere fencing-match, it would be unjustifiable to be hard upon the vanquished party; but he who fights out a war of life and death to its last issue, and thereby forfeits a State, has no right to demand that it should be restored to him.

The peculiar atrocity of a crime against kindred, the liability of high-treason to the extreme penalty of the law, are not founded in considerations of safety, nor the result of positive laws of the State; but the duty of visiting such crimes with the severest punishment arises from the circumstance that they run counter to the dictates of our natural instincts,—the preservation of that by which we are, and subsist; hence, as with all unnatural crimes, those who commit them deserve extirpation. That higher penalties should be attached to offences against fellow-citizens than to those against foreigners, is no sign of barbarism, but founded in a true sense of the proper ties which link men together. A high-principled legislation makes the penalties heavier in proportion to the sinfulness of the offence.

Right, says Jacobi, has its origin in the impulse to self-preservation, and the nobler the life, the higher the right. A nation possesses as distinct a life as an individual, and that which constitutes each man a member of it, belongs to the nobler part of his being.

A common nationality is superior to the political relationships by which the different peoples of one stock are united or separated. By descent, language, manners, traditions and

literature, a brotherhood subsists between them, parting them off from other races and rendering the exclusive feeling, which would allow them to ally themselves with the foreigner against those of their own stock, an impiety. On this point, all ages have pronounced the same verdict, as they have also with respect to the unity springing from a common faith. To form an alliance with Mahomedans against Christians, was always regarded as an unpardonable crime; and this was the case among Protestants as much as Catholics; therefore, did not arise from the circumstance that the whole of Catholic Christendom formed in some measure a political unity. It was for the sake of this unity, and not on account of the imperial bond, that German, nay, even Italian princes took up arms in defence of the Hungarian dominions of the House of Austria,—that aid and volunteers were despatched from the remotest States to the defence of Candia. Nothing excited more universal indignation against Louis XIV., than the diversion by which he prevented the liberation of the Christians belonging to what had once been the Eastern Empire. At that time, the Turks presented towards Germany and Europe an attitude as threatening as that of France since the Revolution, and in all the misfortunes which, from that time forwards, broke upon the hoary head of the monarch, his contemporaries saw the righteous judgment of Heaven.

If the Coalition against the French Revolution had not been conducted so feebly and unskilfully as to make it evident that salvation was not to be hoped for on that course, no well-grounded objection could be made to the doctrine which lay at the basis of that first combination,—that the States of Europe formed a collective body, although not guided by an actual federative union, and that each State was bound to take part in the cause of Europe. Venice thought she acted wisely when she remained neutral; but action might have saved Lombardy and averted war from her own territories. She fell, and although it was by the enemy's hand, and she had not placed a single man at the disposal of the French, Austria had no scruple in accepting the country as a compensation, because it was through the

fault of Venice that she had lost Lombardy. So too, Genoa forfeited her constitution and political existence, because she opened, instead of closing Italy to the general enemy; and afterwards, when great decisions hung upon her conduct and she might and ought to have acted, she never risked anything nor undertook anything, but was rather of assistance to the French. If she, too, should not be restored as a State, it will be a similar result of such conduct; and it is a very striking instance of a crime against the nationality of Italy followed by its just punishment according to the laws of nations.

When, from a very great nation like the German, one branch has emigrated, as in the case of the English, and settled in a distant country entirely detached from its primitive home, it may grow up into a distinct nation. Still, the original affinity is not obliterated, and although their mutual relations become more complex, there still endures a natural connection of the whole with the whole, and of the individual with the individual, in the kindred State and with their common unity, whose infraction brings its own punishment with it. If the members of one politically distinct branch of a nation separate themselves as a people from the great whole, like the Dutch and the German Swiss,—if they then become estranged from the national feelings and acquire a new sense of nationality within their own narrow sphere,—they may make foreigners of themselves to their own detriment, but they cannot annul the rights of the nation from which they desire to withdraw. On this principle is based the right of mediation, claimed by the Allies with regard to Switzerland.

From this national relation springs the right of *proscription*, on the part of a federal assembly or its head, when a single State is unfaithful to the nation of which it forms a part, and turns traitor by allying itself with foreigners. The authority thus to inflict the highest punishment is no more derived from treaties, than the authority of the State—of the supreme power—is originated by, and based upon the conclusion of a social compact; but as the latter



authority results from the very essence and necessity of the State, so does the former spring from that nationality which in happier times gave birth to the federal constitution.

Our imperial constitution did not even possess the semblance of such an origin. The German races, once all separate and independent, had grown into one Empire through alliance and conquest; and if the sentences of proscription, pronounced during the progress of its dissolution upon such States as joined the common enemy, had not rested upon a more stable ground than the shifting sands of external forms, they would have been as unjust as they are now just, according to the unanimous verdict of all Germans. Here is a *jus gentium* in the true sense of the word; and what has been recognised by all nations as law on these matters is as unimpeachable as are the prescriptions of its common law to the individual State. We will proceed at once to cite several examples recorded in history, but in the first place wish to call attention to three points.

Since the rights of the collective nation did not owe their existence to the constitution according to which they are exercised, so they would not be cancelled by the circumstance of its being no longer possible to give them a voice through the forms of our constitution, nor yet by the dissolution of the constitution itself. They will continue to subsist, if Germany should never again be erected into a political organisation comprehending all its members; they hold good, even though not the greater but only the smaller part of the collective nation should recognise them and possess the will and the energy to enforce them.

It is quite superfluous to speak of the illegality of the dissolution of the German Empire, which is not in the least diminished by the fact that its then existing condition of decay and disorder demanded an entire reconstruction; the foundations were still remaining. Still less can we oppose to these rights the Confederation of the Rhine, whose very essence may be termed high treason against nationality.

Further, it makes a wide difference in the application of

strict justice, who the foreign enemy is with whom a single State of a nation enters into a culpable alliance: whether it is an hereditary enemy who, from the relative position of the two nations, must make subjugation his ultimate aim; or an enemy who is only such from accidental and temporary circumstances, and with whom a permanent peace may hereafter be established; and also what have been the character and system of the foreign State on each particular occasion. The alliance which, nearly sixty years ago, brought French armies even into Hanoverian territory was a grievous misfortune; but, as the French ministry never dreamt nor could have dreamt at that time, of conquests in Germany, such an alliance under Louis XV. and Louis XVI. was something very different from one under Louis XIV. or in our own days: different above all on account of the feelings which in these times must render such a connection an unnatural abomination.

Finally, who can deny the existence of a right of necessity, which knows no law, to break the yoke of tyranny? Thus the countries of North Germany threw themselves into the arms of Gustavus Adolphus; and it was blameless and right to do so, because they were reduced to the last extremity and had no help in themselves; because the Swedish king was German in mind and education—much more German than Ferdinand;—and because from his aid no danger to German liberties could arise, but by the grossest culpability. He who would urge against our proposition our own alliance with Russia, and our common war waged against the renegade States of Germany, does not even merit this answer at our hands; for the cause of God was with us and the Russians, and the cause of German nationality was with us, and would have been with us if we had only numbered as many thousands under arms as we did hundreds of thousands. Moreover, there was not even, as in 1631, the chance that our liberator might extend his dominion over German soil, which never entered the thoughts of the Emperor Alexander.

To the following examples of the verdict pronounced by all ages upon this right of nations, *every* student of history

will be able to add others from memory; it is sufficient for our purpose to indicate guiding principles.

The Greek states were not bound together by any political confederacy; the Amphictyonic (which was not universal), had indeed nationality for its aim, but only in order to cherish brotherly feeling between those of the same stock, and to prevent the feuds between the various tribes, from assuming an implacable and deadly character. Each State was absolutely independent so far as independence was morally possible. But when the Persians advanced to enslave Greece, the delegates of the peoples who wished to be free, assembled on the Isthmus, resolved to exterminate those who should ally themselves with the foreign foe, and to dedicate the tenth of the spoils to the gods. And this decree has ever been pronounced just by all who have read it.

The Romans inflicted a severe punishment on the Triburtii in time of peace, because they had hired auxiliary troops from the Gauls, their common hereditary foe.

Marbod had withdrawn from the German cause during the war with the Cheruscii, when (after the victory of Hermann) his aid would have been sufficient, even in the time of Augustus, to have liberated the Rhine and the Danube. He held himself aloof and suffered the allies to be overpowered in the campaign of Germanicus; not that he lent assistance to the Romans, for he would gladly have seen them weakened, but above all he hated the republican tribes. As soon as the retreat of the Romans had left the latter free play, they, with Hermann at their head, turned their arms against the mighty king of the Suevi, who, vanquished and despoiled of his territories, died as a fugitive at Ravenna. And as long as Germans have read the history of Tacitus, they have recognised in this a righteous retribution; though no one has ever imagined, that the tribes on the Weser and those on the Danube and Upper Elbe composed a confederation, whose laws Marbod had broken. It is enough that he is responsible for the non-liberation of the districts we have mentioned,—for the defeats in the disastrous campaign against Germanicus,—for the devastation of the

country between the Rhine and the Weser,—for the most imminent peril of subjugation after so many glorious deeds, and (though it was averted in his day by a miracle), for the conquest of the right bank of the Rhine and of the country between the Main and the Danube by the Romans a hundred years later.

No less intrinsically just was the sentence of outlawry against the Electors of Cologne and Bavaria, who had surrendered their strongholds to Louis XIV. and joined with him against Germany. In this instance, indeed, there was an outward form of law for the satisfaction of weak minds; but in the case of the Duke of Mantua this cannot be maintained, unless we adopt a highly unjust and arrogant conception of the relation of Italy to the German Empire. And mournfully as national unity has been rent asunder in Italy, still, upon it rests the legality of the sentence passed on the weak and treacherous duke, who had yielded up his fortresses to the common enemy,—the sentence, in virtue of which, its inheritance was taken from the house of Gonzaga, and is now in the hands of Austria.

The extent and duration of States are mutable, like their constitutions, none of which are endowed with unalterable permanence. In both, there occur crises ordained by nature, which form the transition to new epochs, and mark off the limits of two periods governed by different systems of law; they are in reality revolutions, which, from the time that they begin to take effect, cannot be judged by the rules appropriate to a permanent condition. To disturb a legitimate order of things, actually existing, is wrong. But, if it only continues to exist in name,—if it is falling to pieces, and amidst its ruins new organisations are forming,—if all circumstances are changing, and everything tends towards a new era, by whose introduction, repose, and, for a time, legal relations of positive validity may become possible,—this epoch of struggle between active powers must not be judged by the same rules as a calmer age.

Here we must guard against a possible misconception.

We do not mean that in such times right and wrong vanish before the all-powerful impulse to the developement of a new era ; that be far from us ; but that there arise clashing rights, and that it is the same with the mutual relations of different States as with the domestic relations of a single commonwealth ; where the most legitimate State may be forced to sacrifice rights and privileges guaranteed by statutes, to tacit, unwritten claims ; and must repeal the former, if an inward transformation have rendered their letter an empty husk, or changed their nature. It is possible for internal political changes to be accomplished without convulsions, because there is a sovereign power which makes the law, and tribunals which administer it, and their authority is admitted. But States which are linked together by invisible bonds of unity are equally liable to these epochs of entire transformation, whose character is determined by the distinguishing peculiarities of the race in question ; but in their case a common supreme power is wanting, and with that, they lack the means of converting actual into formal right. Hence the wars of such periods are universal, furious and subversive ; their decisions sometimes in accordance with, sometimes contrary to justice. And when a new order of things begins to acquire consistency and vitality, it is constantly exposed to renewed attacks from selfishness, party-spirit and prejudice. In such eras, nature herself demands a coalition of States ; and where this is effected, there is at least a recognition of their invisible unity and of the right to create new organisations. On this account, federal institutions for States having a common nationality are most desirable wherever they are possible, and no perverse letter renders them incapable of enacting formal laws. Where such institutions are wanting, to refuse to recognise any Right but that of maintaining the *status quo*, is to rebel against nature and to close up the course of the river till it bursts through the dam.

It is peculiar to such times that they do not admit of that regard to considerations of leniency and mercy, whose observance adorns and ennobles times of peace.

The more a man is a citizen,—the more lively and ever present is the political consciousness of each individual, the more perfect is the life of individuals, and of the State, which is their sum. Hence it is unquestionably true, that small free communities and principalities offer the most advantageous condition to man, so long as they can subsist, internally and externally, as independent States ;—such as was the condition of the ancient European world before Alexander's age, and the modern period which began with the eleventh century. But, as we cannot stop the golden days of childhood and youth in their flight, but must keep pace with the time, though it yield us no more flowers,—as he who would fain live on in the dreams of the past, forfeits the present, so shall we fare if we confound the acknowledgment of the happiness of those ages, with the wish to preserve their outward form.

The times change, empires arise and grow mighty, and small communities and principalities cease to be States ; for a State has no right to the name unless it possess an independent existence,—unless it be capable of exercising a will of its own, of maintaining itself, and defending its rights. We cannot call that a State which is unable even to entertain such an idea, which is obliged to link itself on to another, to subordinate itself to a foreign will, and to select its master simply with reference to the preservation of its own existence. Such protected communities may afford a very comfortable life to their members in peaceful times, nay, even favourable to literature and the arts ; but he who belongs to them, has no fatherland, and lacks the best gift with which Providence can endow man. For not only in servitude is man robbed of half his life ; without a State and an immediate fatherland the noblest man is little worth,—with them, even the simple can do much. If the times are dangerous and perturbed, those who are called to the defence of the nation find their power greatly impaired, and their burdens multiplied, by these No-States around them.

The imperial cities *were* a treasure to Germany so long as they could subsist and maintain themselves as States,

sometimes singly, sometimes in alliance, according to the magnitude of the hostile powers. Divided into a hundred republics, Italy would have attained the height of prosperity, had one of her large cities, called by its moral and intellectual pre-eminence to great deeds—Florence or Venice—had the wisdom and courage to bring about a confederation of the single cities with the preservation of their liberties (as *municipia*); and, when this was a possible and needful step, nothing was left of the fair old times but their remembrance, and tyrants had already joined many cities together in a yoke of bondage. In the sixteenth century, when foreign armies had crossed the Alps, established themselves in the country, and were quarrelling with each other for the mastery of the land, wise men bewailed the irreparable loss of the opportunity that had presented itself to their forefathers. Had the opportunity been embraced, many would have been the harangues on insatiable ambition, and the violation of the existing state of possession. As it was, scarcely a trace was left of the so-called state of possession, while a foreign State subjected to itself, or its dependent vassals, the fairest provinces of the country; and Italy forfeited happiness, dignity, virtue, and independence for ever.

When the Macedonians were treading dismembered Greece underfoot, the Achæans had a right to unite Arcadia and Argolis with themselves, for the sake of self-preservation, and the revival of their common independence. He who resisted such a union, then, because, more than a century earlier, the towns and rural districts had subsisted as States, and been able to maintain themselves with glory, sinned in his blindness against the universal cause of his nation, as well as that of his native State. Since the infatuation and self-conceit of those who were not called to be great among their fellow States had issued in the victorious advance of Philip,—seduced by the persuasions of the jealous-minded,—as soon as he had established his power at home, those who were truly well-affected had received a sufficient warning, or their intellects were too contracted to be worth taking into account. Undoubtedly, the Achæans would have ceased to

possess this right, had they not granted equal rights to all the confederate cities. It is our first duty to effect union, and not subjugation. Hence, too, after one short generation, though the Achæans remained in name the nucleus of the State, the united Arcadians became so in fact, because fate had so ordained it that the most eminent men of that age were born among the latter; both were equal in their love of their common fatherland, and their pride in its name.

The Achæans effected their union in equality, by placing the constitutions of the newly-received cities on the same footing with that which they had inherited from their fathers; but a similar proceeding neither can, nor need to be adopted in our own times, by a State, which derives from fixed monarchical institutions that stability of the whole, which enables it to permit untouched the greatest variety of its parts,—a variety, whose utmost developement the wise Moser found no less attractive to the taste, than stimulating to the energies. . . . .



EXTRACTED FROM  
THE PAMPHLET ON SECRET ASSOCIATIONS,  
IN ANSWER TO  
PROFESSOR SCHMALZ'S DENUNCIATION OF THE TUGENDBUND.\*

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. . . . . A much more important matter, which is, however, scarcely alluded to by M. Schmalz, is the widely-diffused belief in the speedy and indispensable introduction of representative institutions. Authors have less direct concern with this subject, and their influence in this respect is comparatively slight. But this belief is a phenomenon, which, without the slightest disposition to give credence to idle tales of secret associations, may well occasion serious reflection among our governments and all right-minded patriots, and at least demands their attention. So much is certain, that our writers show themselves utterly wanting in a living knowledge of the State, and of history, as soon as they approach this topic; indeed, it is no exaggeration to say, that the ideas of our politicians on this point are incomparably cruder, shallower, and more chimerical than those of the leaders of the first French National Assembly, among whom there were many functionaries, and, moreover, many thoroughly honest men. Anyone who looks beyond words to things, must behold with melancholy the mixture of despotic ideas of administration (on which freedom depends far more than on the form of the legislation), with the panacea of popular representation, without a basis in society, or a preparatory discipline for those called to take a

\* See vol. ii., p. 4.

part in it,—must behold with melancholy the crumbling away of all ancient institutions, which have only become unserviceable because they were as little comprehended as the beauty of our old German art, and the greatness of our old times were forty years ago. Had their spirit been understood, nothing would have been needed but to purify them, and restore them to their original signification. It is a lamentable necessity to be forced to undertake new creations; the age has shown itself valiant in war, but indolent and barren in constructive energy; and the more urgent is the exigency, the further off is relief. The name of freedom has grown dear to many, but few reflect that freedom is not a condition of enjoyment, but of toils and dangers hitherto unknown to them. Not until there are many who recognise this, and yet say boldly: let it be so, and for this very account we will thank the king who will bestow it on us;—not until it is perceived by some, that all the theatrical adjuncts of a constitution are but accidents, and its invisible basis its essence,—not until then, can we promise the enjoyment of freedom to our descendants. Meanwhile, it is useless to attempt to roll back the age; and to moan over the difficulties it presents, is to corrupt it. What has been destroyed, is destroyed; and this is the work of a higher power, and of the irresistible collective forces of a horrible era. Fidelity, patriotism, morality must, and may pervade and inspire our new institutions, even if the latter do not at once take their shape from our necessities, and correspond to them. And here it is our duty not to sigh over our perils, but to teach what is essence and what appearance,—to instruct the well-disposed,—to thwart the fools in time. . . . .

THE ESSENCE OF THE STATE.\*  

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THE State is not a society, but a whole, of which individuals are the members. It is not a union entered into by voluntary consent, nor yet contrived and resolved on by reason and deliberation; but is as essentially a portion of the system of nature, as the herding together of gregarious animals. Were it otherwise, the State would have no right to maintain itself independently of the collective will of the individuals composing it; and every demand on them to sacrifice themselves, would be an act of usurpation and tyranny.

The State is necessary in order to supersede the insulation and transitoriness of individual life,—in order to present a sum of human activity beyond the power of the individual to accomplish, and beyond the power of a number to concert by occasional meetings. Its object is, that a people should stand up like a man with will and thought. It is necessary, in order that caprice and self-will may be bridled and repressed,—that reverence for law, and self-sacrificing love may be enkindled and cherished; it is necessary for the sake of that which it positively confers, and that which can only spring up and unfold itself under its sway. Its object is strength, intellect, wisdom, virtue and justice.

Unity is its governing principle; the relation between this unity and the individual citizens, is like that of the soul to the body, and the normal position of everyone who lives in a State, is that of a subject and only a subject.

\* From a single manuscript leaf, apparently written about 1817.

The law and the public authorities constitute the soul of the State: the authorities, ruling by virtue of the law; the law, venerated by most nations as a divine oracle, always independent of the caprice of the people, and unchangeable, except by the lapse of time; and, like their language and native peculiarities, serving to distinguish one nation from another.

In a State where the laws were revealed, and the supreme authority inspired, they must be omnipotent; and every limitation of their power would be a crime and a folly.

But the actual State, even during the fairest periods of history, is only a shadow of the perfect one; the law has been the work of man, and the authorities have been human beings like their subjects; and hence, freedom is necessary. For freedom is the limitation of the authorities, that arbitrary caprice may not be able to rule as law,—and the limitation of the law, that imperfect beings may not make regulations, in cases where the individual can see better from his nearer point of view, by his own sagacity.

The true civil condition is that in small States, where all the branches of power are lodged in the hands of the authorities; so long as each of these States is permitted to retain its due place among the rest, to be such a whole as a State ought to be, and in which its citizens may reach that elevation, the attainment of which is the aim of civil polity. But when this equilibrium is destroyed, the epoch begins, in which a new political organisation becomes necessary; viz., States forming a whole out of the States that have sunk into communities, as the latter form a whole out of the individuals, or, more strictly speaking, the families composing them.

A State, where law has been merged into the arbitrary will of its supreme authority, and the latter, mistaking the end for which the State exists, recognises no communities within it and no liberties against it, is despotic and would cease to be a State, were it not that a civil organisation is so indispensable to human nature, that even in the greatest degeneracy it ever presents itself spontaneously.

The representation of the supreme authority in a person, is always imperfect, because it can only be exercised by men, who, like their subjects, are but an integral portion of the whole of the State; and thus, all authorities, princes, senates, or popular assemblies are but an image of the true supreme authority; but, as an image, they exist by God's grace, so far as they do not act contrary to their essence, or promote the deterioration and misery of their people. . . .

APOLOGY FOR AN EXPRESSION IN NIEBUHR'S PREFACE TO  
VON VINCKE'S WORK, ON THE  
INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF GREAT BRITAIN.\*

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FROM the days of Seneca to those of Bolingbroke, many moral treatises have been written on the sources of consolation in exile; and, as the period of this class of writings commenced three centuries before Seneca, and did not terminate with Bolingbroke, many essays of the kind must have been composed, of whose present or past existence my indifference to the whole class has kept me in ignorance. Those which I can recall, contain many elegant and acute sayings, but it is striking, that they never mention one evil which is inseparable from every long residence abroad, but for which it would be difficult, perhaps, to suggest any sufficient remedy. Seneca and Plutarch it is true could not become conscious of it, but a British statesman ought to have felt it; it is sad indeed for him, that he seems to have been wholly unaware of it.

It has been permitted to our generation and our land to

\* This letter was written at Rome, in 1818, and published in the *Nachgelassene Schriften*, p. 466. It is not mentioned there to whom it was addressed. The sentence which Niebuhr here explains was written in 1815, and is as follows: "The following work was composed by my friend, Baron von Vincke, in the summer of 1808, while he was residing in forced inactivity in the Prussian Marches. He was impelled to it by the conviction, which at that time was the guiding-star of our legislation towards a fair and noble goal,—the perception, that freedom depends infinitely more on the administration than on the constitution of a country;—a conviction which gave rise to the municipal laws, and would have placed by their side a complete series of similar institutions, had not Fate stepped in to forbid." See *Nachgelassene Schriften*, p. 462.

know what it is for all fellow-citizens, the learned and the simple, to share in one common feeling, nay, to partake it with thousands of foreigners; and every man who enjoyed this consciously, will not forget his whole life long, how loving, peaceful, and strong he grew under its influence. This blessed state of feeling could not endure for ever, and it was but too fleeting, yet we should thank God for having suffered us to taste it, and carefully preserve its memory; it may teach us much.

But even in less extraordinary times, there is a unity of thought, which can only exist in perfection in our native country, though there, it may not pervade the whole community. There are many kinds of joy and grief, of weal and woe, which we can share only with our fellow-citizens. On this point, however, we must submit to what Fate may ordain, and the experience of life will no doubt teach us to renounce even this blessing with composure. Still, its absence would have weighed heavily on Thucydides or Polybius, even had their official duties, and not constraint, kept them in Thrace or Rome.

But there is yet another evil of which I intended more especially to speak, and that the two men I have just named were no strangers to it, is easily to be discerned from their writings, though we read no direct expression of it there,—namely, the most free and strong of men has not alone an individual character, which would have remained essentially the same under different circumstances, and an individual cast of mind; but he holds a place in his time and nation, considered as a whole, or, if this is severed by dissensions, in one of its parts. Now, if our life falls in one of those periods when the world is undergoing a transformation, and a movement prevails, which to some wears the appearance of a new creation, to others only of chaos, every individual, as long as he remains within the circle, partakes, partly from sympathy, partly through mutual contact, in the influence of those causes which determine the position of minds allied to his own. Thus he remains in harmony and association, and needs no extraordinary freedom or strength of mind to

prevent his becoming merely the passive recipient of impressions within this circle. But when he has passed its bounds, whether he remain stationary, or move in his own path alone, while those, of whose intellectual community he was formerly a member, continue to influence each other, it is equally inevitable that he should feel himself severed from them in views and opinions—nay, in his whole inward life, when any event occurs to bring the separation to light. Even between men who know each other most thoroughly, how many misunderstandings are possible in absence; because the chain of ideas which has led the one to a certain view, or its form of expression, is not divined, or because the other has altered his own mental position.

Thus, I not merely have a presentiment, I perceive most clearly, that two years of absence must have disturbed the harmony of thought between myself and those friends of similar sentiments (not to speak of others), whom I have left behind; for I have stood still at the same point, and here, where no breeze ever stirs the intellectual atmosphere, none has reached me. I believe this the more readily, because at a former period, a distance of two hundred leagues, and the influence peculiar to all local coteries of thinking persons, brought it to pass, that a somewhat carelessly expressed sentiment, which has been my inmost conviction throughout my life, gave rise to a very strange and rather unpleasant misconception, even among old friends. Not but what my carelessness so far renders them excusable as to leave me no cause for painful feeling, and makes me unable to excuse myself fully for any heedlessness. For, certainly no one has a right, least of all when writing in a condensed form, to use important words in a meaning and extent not universally accepted. Though the context may point to the true significance alone, and the whole variously-expressed mode of thought of the writer may require it, hasty readers, whose life is unlike his, will be apt to misinterpret him, while those who, up to the moment of reading, have thought like him and with him, and he with them, will find a mistake impossible.

You probably still remember the surprise and disap-



probation with which some of our friends regarded my assertion, that freedom depends more on the administration, than on the constitution of a country. This sentiment appeared to them to be nothing more nor less than a declaration in favour of despotism, because it may perchance have reminded them of the old motto :—

“For forms of government let fools contest,  
That which is best administer’d is best.”

Thus I am supposed to have thought, and to have meant to say, that the constitution is a matter of indifference ; where the best, that is the cleverest, administration exists, the country is best off ; and this is all the man of sense should look to. But this sentence stood at the commencement of the preface to a work, which did not pretend in the least to give an introduction to a clever and correct method of administration, applicable under all forms ; but plainly declared itself to contain a picture of a certain form of the internal execution of the laws, and the mode in which the citizens themselves took part in the maintenance of social order. Hence the reader, who had been startled at the first moment by the unaccustomed use of the phrase, might have seen how it was to be understood, in a few minutes, and must infallibly have done so, as soon as he got into my friend’s treatise. That, where a language is wanting in richness, comprehensive words should unavoidably be employed, sometimes in a wider, sometimes in a narrower sense, might also be proved by examples from the ancients.

An opportunity must have offered itself spontaneously, to induce me to give such an explanation as some of my distant friends demanded ; and I was the less inclined to make one, because I thought I had at least as much a right to blame their misconception, as they could have to find fault with my not very clear sentence ; besides, time clears up everything of itself, where the inner sense of the whole gives the key to the meaning. A political pamphlet, which is independent of the views of the day, will be read by very few after the lapse of ten years ; but those few will understand

it more thoroughly than the many who read it when it came out.

It cannot be questioned, that the word, constitution, is customarily used both in a wide and in a narrow sense. In the wider sense, it most undoubtedly includes the forms of all the smaller and ever smaller circles which are contained within the State, and no less those of the courts of justice, the governments, and the citizen's rights and relations to the State; and it is thus comprehensively that Aristotle has delineated the polity of Athens. The narrower sense is restricted to the nature of the supreme power over the whole, and this sense is certainly much more common than the former; indeed, few things are rarer than to find the first applied in its full extent. The title of the work, which first gave Germany a concise and intelligent account of the constitution of the English counties, was chosen according to this common mode of expression. And what is more usual than to hear the English constitution spoken of, when nothing further is meant by the phrase than the participation of the two branches of Parliament in the sovereign power? A dictionary, which should indicate the actual customary employment of words, would not give any other definition to this phrase, in accordance with the sense of those who make use of it.

The last work of Madame de Staël, happens to be lying before me at this moment; and just as she never dreams that elections such as Necker decreed, which once conceded can never be abolished, and the ministerial power that he desired, are incompatible with the English constitution, even so, no other writer, as far as I remember, has formed a complete conception of the whole of the English constitution, in the first mentioned sense of the term; certainly, the majority at least of persons do not go beyond the narrowest idea of the words when they speak of constitution and liberty.

But as all the rest which is included in the widest sense of the term, constitution, must also be designated by a word, the word, administration, is extended beyond its first idea so

as to take all this in ; and the more suitably, because the parish authorities really obey and administer the laws, but do not govern.

If, however, it is really necessary to express my creed in words which can scarcely admit of misinterpretation, I must say that it is of more, nay to speak frankly, of infinitely more consequence to the cause of freedom, whether the subjects in their individual counties and parishes are kept in a state of tutelage, or are able to use their own understanding, and follow their own inclinations and convictions with regard to all those relations which bring every man into contact with the administration,—than, whether the boundary line between the powers of the Government and the representative body is drawn a little on this side or that : nay, of more consequence than the particular shape assumed by the representative body, provided always, that it does not swallow up the Government in itself,—which, however, is regarded by many as the true essence of freedom. The supreme power, whether simple or complex, is always omnipotent, and freedom vanishes before it, if she be not guarded by those lower authorities, which, according to the above-mentioned use of the phrase, are included under administration. But, on the other hand, if the supreme power be not in harmony, but divided within itself, the State and freedom, or the constitution, will go to ruin ; hence, we must be content with its harmony.

But if I believe that freedom is based upon, and limited by the administration, rather than the constitution of a country, must I therefore regard the form of the constitution as indifferent, or of minor importance ? Yes, if there were no other aims to be attained than freedom. But, as I saw that these aims were never sought, never dreamt of, that freedom alone was on the lips of every one—and yet not the genuine freedom, for that was carelessly exposed to its enemies—it seemed to me a great advantage that we should have a full picture represented to us of what in truth forms the chief basis of that freedom, the possession of which, at the present moment, no one can well deny to the English.

## FRAGMENT ON THE STATE OF SWITZERLAND.\*

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POETS have compared the Swiss people to their own Alps, which time is powerless to change. This simile has reminded me in the north-eastern districts, the only part of the country we have seen, of the false porphyry, which forms a large portion of the mountains there ; and which, when exposed to external influences, is worn away by weather, decays, and crumbles into dust.

The Canton of St. Gall is composed of districts which had never before been connected in any manner ; or, if they were, had separated because it was impossible for them to hold together. Divided by religion, they are no less so by the occupations and habits of daily life. Not merely is there as great a difference between the Protestant inhabitant of St. Gall, and the Catholic native of Sargans, as between the men of Zurich and Soleure : but the same difference exists between the Catholic of Sargans, and the native of any of the Catholic counties of St. Gall. At the present time, the former subjects of the older Cantons (Rheinthal, Sargans, and Gaster), would on no account return to their ancient condition : but in 1798, when the Revolution was brought about in Switzerland, no change was desired, except by a few restless spirits and such persons as had been irritated by tyrannical actions on the part of the governors. The very great freedom of the subjects in the Swiss counties

\* This paper on the condition of the Canton of St. Gall in 1823, was enclosed in a letter to De Serre ; Niebuhr intended it to be the first of a series of letters to him on the condition of Switzerland and Germany ; but the death of De Serre, in the following year, prevented their continuation.

was permitted, because the governors could any time interfere and act irresponsibly. The municipality of St. Gall would gladly have remained as it was. It was a close corporation, possessed of considerable property; as it had no subject districts it was free from the collisions of the sovereign States; the body of electors was not changed by new arrivals or departures, because the inhabitants of the country, for some miles round the city, were excluded by their religion from the citizenship; consequently, the children of the citizens did not find their gains diminished by the activity of new comers, and were not driven to seek another home.

The prince-abbot was lord of the manor and governor in St. Gall-proper, and in Toggenburg; he also held several rich lordships in Thurgovia, Swabia and the Vorarlberg; St. Gall-proper was completely Catholic, having been re-converted by force from the Reformed religion: in Toggenburg both religions existed. There was no meeting of the Estates, and the lord of the manor exercised his powers in some cases with inconceivable despotism. If a young man led a profligate life and did not amend his courses on receiving admonitions to do so, the magistrates would, without further ceremony, have him carried out of his house in the night, and delivered over to the recruiting officers for foreign service. The few old monks still remaining assure us, indeed, that such extreme measures were never unjustly employed: this is of course not to be believed; but, no doubt, the community was in this way relieved from its vicious members whom it does not know how to get rid of now. No taxes whatever were imposed, the revenues of the ruler consisted exclusively of ground-rents and the revenues of his domain; and there was great comfort among the people.

But the harmony and attachment between the people and their magistracy did not continue. The first cause was the same which may be found in all the ecclesiastical principalities in Germany: personal attachment can only be felt towards a dynasty, or at most a really illustrious family, as at Berne; and where a foundation of this kind was without fame, its members had nothing to render them venerable,

though their conduct was not scandalous, as in the German Cathedral chapters, still less like that of their own predecessors in the fifteenth century. A second cause in Toggenburg, was the mixture of religions, and the ever renewed attempts at smaller or greater extortions, which were aimless, because they could not really injure the Protestant Church, whose existence in the province was guaranteed by treaties; and thus at the same time the more exasperating, because the insulted Protestants could resist, under the protection of the Cantons of their own confession who guaranteed their rights, and had therefore no reason to feel much alarm for the consequences. The inner province was indeed purely Catholic, and the Reformed religion had maintained its ground there only for a very short period: but throughout Germany, wherever Protestantism has been suppressed by force, even where the present inhabitants have not had a protestant idea for the last two centuries, the wounds caused by those violent proceedings have never healed,—as for example in Bohemia.

Toggenburg was inclined to join the revolutionary party; still more was this the case in the rest of the province. As early as 1797, before the French had occupied Switzerland, these districts had risen against their abbot, and forced him to accept their conditions. During the attempt made to force Switzerland into unity, they were formed into one Canton with Appenzell, but nothing permanent took its rise in those times of violence and tyranny.

When Napoleon granted the Act of Mediation (towards the end of 1802), he divided all Switzerland into three classes of constitutions. The democratic Cantons—which were regarded with preference by all the world, even by the most conservative, because the Forest Cantons were and had remained venerable—received their old constitutions back again quite unchanged, only with a stipulation, that they should admit to union with themselves the communes existing within their territories, which had been hitherto their subjects. The aristocratic Cantons all received institutions of nearly the same character, the country districts

being placed in a more favourable position than they had held formerly, but without depriving the towns of all their privileges,—the old names and some old forms being retained. The new Cantons were each presented with a complete representative constitution, based on numbers alone, but leaving great power in the hands of the government. It is clear that the men of the revolutionary party, to whom Buonaparte had entrusted this business, gave full play to their old tastes in such an amusing occupation; but, at the same time, made over to that branch of government, which answered to the *directoire exécutif*, all the power which the latter had sought to assume in France. In these constitutions of the new Cantons, not the slightest consideration was shown for old rights and customs, or for local circumstances; on the contrary, all this was intentionally trodden under foot.

The burgesses of St. Gall, here the true and only aristocracy, behaved in this crisis as aristocracies have often behaved. They murmured, complained, but would rather suffer everything to take its course, than give up something freely, to save what they could. The small number among themselves belonging to the revolutionary party—who were, almost without exception, medical and literary men,—had already bought wisdom; but the conservatives felt more pleasure in their discomfiture, than inclination to call on them for help, though they would have made the best interpreters and mediators in the work of saving whatever could still be preserved. In the negotiations carried on at Paris, with Roederer and Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely, none of the Swiss envoys spoke for the city of St. Gall. She therefore received, according to the supposed amount of the population, only nine representatives out of a hundred and fifty. The representation was almost a nullity from 1803 to 1814; the government of the Canton was in the hands of a single man of ability, who carried out many improvements, of the kind which were looked upon by our enlightened men, thirty or forty years ago, as the true salvation,—sanitary police, better roads, primary schools, &c.

In 1814, when all the constitutions in Switzerland were remodelled, the same process took place in the Canton St. Gall, from which Appenzell had again been separated in 1802. The old claims now found some support and favour from abroad, though they often received ridicule from the same quarter, while the results of the Revolution were tenderly treated. Twenty-four members, out of the hundred and fifty who composed the Great Council, were now allotted to the city; and the four-ninths of the government offices, guaranteed to the Protestants according to their proportion of the population, fell mostly to her share.

Yet it is a question, whether she gained any great advantages over her former position, between 1803 and 1814, by this increase in the number of her representatives. The members of the Great Council, which meets twice a year, usually remain nearly unchanged from one session to another; and, although very few among them gain such an insight as would qualify them for forming decisions, yet they have become accustomed to the various matters which come before them, and do decide with the utmost confidence on every question;—they are no longer the insignificant, harmless body they were under Buonaparte. Hence, even those who formerly belonged to the revolutionary party, however liberal they may still be, have acquired a sincere conviction, that mere number is a bad principle of representation, and that the majority of a representative assembly is not infallible.

The greatest grievance lies in the taxes. The city, whose population amounts to about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the whole population of the Canton, pays  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the taxes. Her representatives ask in vain for the framing of a register of estates, by which a due share might be allotted to landed property,—they can never carry the measure. On the other hand, the city must bear a part of every expence which appears advantageous to the country.

A man of clear judgment, on whose authority reliance can be placed, who seems to have been in his youth inclined to the revolutionary party—and even now can hardly make up his mind to acknowledge that he has repented—but who is,



at the same time, too honest to disguise the truth, gave me much information in answer to my many questions, of which the most essential points are the following :—The population of the city has somewhat increased, and many new houses have been erected in the suburbs, to which the rich have removed from within the enclosure of the walls. These changes have been caused by some past years of prosperity, in both trade and manufactures ; at present, however, the manufactures are in a very depressed condition, and although goods are still exported into Lombardy, this contraband trade is so uncertain and expensive, that very little profit is made on the sales. Many a manufacturer sells below cost-price for cash, if he can do it without being found out. There are no doubt some houses possessed of larger capital than five and twenty years ago, but the general comfort of the citizens, and the number of thriving families is strikingly diminished. The number of poor has very much increased, and is likely to do so, in consequence of the constant accessions which the city now receives from the rest of the Canton. The city has lost its municipal property. A very great change has taken place ; first, in morals,—formerly, the birth of two illegitimate children was regarded as a blot upon the yearly registers of births ; last year twenty-four were born. Secondly, in political feeling,—the citizen had formerly a fatherland within very narrow boundaries, scarcely extending beyond the walls, now he has none : for the city has no longer a separate existence, and the Canton is worse than indifferent to him, so he is bidden to look on all Switzerland in that light.

In this Canton, as in most others, especially the new ones, the number of paid functionaries is incredibly large,—so large, that the burdens arising from it are certainly heavier than would exist in a district of equal size under a monarchy, including its share of the general, as well as the local expences. No appointment is without salary, the salaries are very small, very few have duties of any importance attached to them. In a country containing 130,000 inhabitants, there are two Landammans, seven other members of

the Lesser Council, presidents of districts, churchwardens of parishes, a Court of Appeal, several district courts of justice ; and the majority of the deputies to the Great Council receive travelling expences and compensation ; all this gives rise to a heavy expenditure ; but the greatest burden is the military service. Military exercises are carried on, as though it were most fully resolved that all Switzerland should rise as one man at some future day ; and I am assured that here, as in other Cantons, the first class of the militia (two men in every hundred souls, here, therefore 2600 men), could be ready to take the field in a week from the issuing of the summons. Every man of twenty years of age, however many sons there may be in the same family, must be fully equipped and armed ; in cases of extreme poverty, the parish must provide the equipment. Muskets and their appurtenances are sold by the State, at the lowest possible prices : but what is lost in this way, must be covered by other sources of revenue. A battery of field-pieces is, for so small a country, no slight affair.

The greatest source of distress is the ever increasing over-population ; and this is, throughout Switzerland, the real subject of hopeless anxiety. A law was made some years ago in St. Gall, which at first sight surprises one in a country where the principles of liberalism have been received as the true Gospel, and yet will not to you, seem irreconcilable with them :—no marriage can take place, without the payment of two *louis d'ors* to the poor's-box of the place. Without doubt, this has given rise to the great increase of illegitimate births.

With what contempt does every class look down on its inferiors in wealth ! The members of the Great Council are, for the most part, scarcely in easy circumstances—many are, on the contrary, needy—yet each is expected in his parish, to contribute to the provision for the poor ; and the poor devil who cannot produce his two *louis d'ors*, is looked on with dislike and contempt.

Zurich has a better appearance than St. Gall. The city is incontestably increasing in wealth, it has something of the

aspect of a capital, and everything looks more respectable, compared to the new Canton.

Before the Revolution, the Government of Zurich was strict and harsh towards its subjects; it was made the instrument of the envious avarice of the burgesses, who for their own advantage, restricted the trade of the villages, on the lake more especially, in a truly discreditable manner; and in the regiments of the Cantons, the farmers of the lake districts could never rise beyond the post of a subaltern officer. That the villages on the lake flourished, in spite of this oppression, forms no excuse for it,—the less, that not the slightest trace of legal origin for these restrictions can be pointed out. The fortifications of Zurich were erected as a protection against her own subjects. The whole country declared for the Revolution, in many parts with much ardour.

The Act of Mediation gave the city some privileges in the numerical representation, but still left an immense preponderance to the country districts. Alarmed at the prospect of finding themselves under the rule of their former subjects, the inhabitants of the city of Zurich took all possible pains to get themselves elected for the country, and they succeeded in obtaining a majority in the Assembly. Then came the year 1814, and the party of the old Government formed a coalition with the revolutionary party outside the city, to obtain a revision of the constitution. Through somewhat complex forms of election, in which the city and country first name their representatives separately, and the representatives then add to their own number a much greater number from the city itself, it is arranged that five-sixths of the Great Council are inhabitants of the city. The country is satisfied, as all obnoxious privileges are abolished.

It is very remarkable, that the liberals, who form almost the whole of the public above the small shop-keepers, are content with this constitution; or, rather, that they will take no pains to change it; though it is terribly against their principles, that five-sixths of the government and representatives should be chosen by a fifteenth part of the

population, or at least, must be chosen from among this fifteenth part. It seems they must often hear themselves taken to task for it by travellers who are not of their party, and by true logical brothers in the faith. One of their principal men took the greatest pains, without noticing my look, to demonstrate to me that, as a general rule, the well-educated class alone must and could govern ; and that at Zurich there were, in addition, so many peculiar circumstances, that here a departure from democratic rules was really unavoidable. It is to be remarked, that in Zurich, the official appointments are by no means so generally salaried as in St. Gall ; hence, they have not much attraction for the inhabitants of the country.

This man, who took the unnecessary pains to convince me, that instinct and interest had rightly led to a deviation from system, is a man of rank, who holds no office, and does not receive a farthing from the State : he is a disinterested and thorough-going disciple of the liberal creed, which he regards as the only rational faith, and every disagreement with it as foolish, and pitifully stupid. There are not many in the sect so candid. His ideal is exactly such a government as at present exists in Zurich ; for great States, the nearest possible approach to it. He would probably have tolerated a king after the fashion of the Spanish constitution, for the sake of what good might come. He is not a native. "An immense change has taken place," he says, "since I first knew Zurich. Thirty years ago, there was a slavish respect for the magistrates, men had scarcely the courage to contradict them in society ; now, every one stands up for what he thinks, without fear of any man." As you will imagine, he would not concede that this "thinking" is nothing further than a blind adoption and repetition of what is said in those writings of the faction, which give the tone to its members. In this respect we are probably still worse off in Germany, than your countrymen. About twelve or fifteen years ago, an excessively cheap Encyclopædia was published, which treated of all subjects occurring in journals and conversation, that every one might "know" something

about them,—scientific and historical subjects, and persons. This work received the significant title of “ Conversations-lexicon.” Since then, one enlarged edition has succeeded another, and the last, in eight very thick volumes, found 15,000 subscribers in four or five months, on which account it is incredibly cheap. It is calculated, that at least 100,000 copies of the different editions must be in existence, while supplements to the earlier ones are constantly published. I know few houses where this book is wanting. Its influence is what you may imagine. A man of learning, to whom I pointed out with indignation and sorrow, the rank growth of such a weed, and the impetus given to empty talk by borrowed knowledge, as a fearful change in Germany, agreed with me to some extent, “ but ” he added, “ fortunately it is liberal.” Of course you, for instance, have your article, which unfortunately I have not looked into ; and a hundred thousand persons in Germany, pronounce upon you according to that. I have mine, too, which has somewhat changed its tone in the different editions. There was a time when the republicans could not be persuaded, that I was not a very acute rogue, who spoke of the Revolution with hatred and abhorrence, only in order to work for it more effectually in secret,—*which seemed to them very allowable !*

## MISCELLANEOUS SELECTIONS.



## MISCELLANEOUS SELECTIONS.

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### EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO SAVIGNY.

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ROME, September 1, 1818.

. . . . . In Villani, book v. cap. xxxi., I find that, up to the year 1207, the supreme power at Florence was vested in four, and afterwards in six consuls, who exercised the functions of the Government and criminal jurisdiction, assisted by a senate of a hundred *buoni huomini*. In that year, the criminal jurisdiction was taken from the consuls and transferred to a *Podestà*. From other passages, we find that these *buoni huomini* were burghers, while the consuls were taken from the higher nobility. Now, since you have made the great discovery that the Decurions in the *Lex Utinensis* are called *boni homines*, and it will occur to you, without my suggestion, that the regular number of the municipal senates consisted of a hundred members, I think we have here a clear example of the municipal constitutions enduring up to the time of their transition into the republican constitutions, which no longer followed an historical developement, but rested upon a new basis. Now, as I am continually growing less inclined to despise any tradition, but rather disposed to assume that, while its significance may have been misunderstood by the moderns, it conceals some other meaning more reconcilable with a free conception of history, I willingly turn to the old legend, that the Emperor Otho was the founder of municipal freedom in Italy. It is quite conceivable that he should have been its author, since so much



at least is clear, in the obscurity of those times, that he must have altered the old Lombard institutions; because, from his time onwards, totally new phenomena appear, the cause of which must be sought in a new order of things.

It is certain, that the Frankish Emperors introduced the Counts into Italy; and these would naturally, from their office, possess the power of inflicting death, in addition to their other powers.

Moreover, it is impossible to refuse credence to the chronicles which state, that the Emperor Otho settled many German *gentes* there, especially in Toscana and Romagna. Now, next to the dissolution of the great fiefs and their transference to Germans, this founder of the German sway over Italy could take no better means to break the Lombard power, and to prevent such elections to the Empire as those of Berenger and Guido, than to free the towns from the power of the feudataries, and to sever their Lombard inhabitants from the mass of their nation, by knitting a bond between them and the Romans. After his date, we shall seldom or never find mention of the Counts out of Lombardy itself, perhaps not even there. According to my ideas, he carried this into effect by forming the German and Lombard *gentes* in the towns into a commune, something of the character of which they may probably have possessed long before, and conferring all the authority of a Count upon the consuls, chosen by the collective people from their number, without abolishing the senate of the *boni homines*, which continued to exist by their side, and received no additions to the power it had previously exercised. We are led to assume the establishment of a uniform arrangement by a lawgiver, from the striking uniformity of this consular government in all the considerable towns of the Lombard Empire,—not in those of the Roman Province.

I am also inclined to attach weight to the legend that the Emperor Henry I. founded the German cities; namely, that he gave them constitutions, uniform in essence, and actually sent them inhabitants in most instances: more of this hereafter. I do not know if it be a discovery of my

own, or a previously known fact, that the parties of the Guelphs and Ghibellines were originally—indeed for nearly the two first centuries of their existence—limited to the nobility. I had long ago divined this, before I began to read Villani, who states it in so many words. He says expressly, that the plebeian senate (I am only giving his testimony in other words) had no share in the schism of the thirteenth century, while all the noble *gentes* took sides in it. I have also a conjecture, supported by strong grounds, that this schism is much older than the time of the Swabian Emperors: indeed, I believe that it took its rise from the times of the Emperor Otho, and proceeded from the encroachments of the newly-settled German, upon the old Lombard *gentes*;—that, in process of time, it should change its aim and significance, lies in the nature of the case; and no less, that the whole people should gradually come to take part in it. In support of this conjecture, I will only adduce the fact, that the great *gentes* who came from Germany were originally all Ghibellines.

The nobility was never, as in ancient Rome, fused into one nation with the *plebs*, although a very large number of families went over to the people. The *parte Guelfa* remains throughout, a completely separate and independent corporation, with its own authorities, corporate property, &c. This appears to me to have grown out of the corporation of the *gentes*, which was set up in opposition to the people. I believe that the *popolo* and the *parte* together form the commune. When the power fell into the hands of the people, which took place in 1250, so that, up to 1260, a real union existed, with the exception of this short period, the *gentes* invariably disdain to obey the supreme authority; hence the *Ordinazione della Giustitia*, introduced by the great Giano della Bella,—which have been so much decried, and I, too, have censured—would be not only justified, but rendered absolutely imperative by this lawlessness and party-spirit.

The *gentes* of the Florentine patricians (*Schiatte*, *Schlachte* with us in Dithmarsh), are of two kinds, the *nobili grandi*

and the *nobili popolani*. They are divided into *gentes*, as the plebeians are into guilds. It is very remarkable that these guilds are not only destitute of the essential institutions of the German guilds, but are connected with entirely different objects, which forcibly remind us of the *Collegia* of the Roman cities under the emperors; thus, among the seven ancient guilds at Florence, are the notaries, the physicians, the apothecaries, &c.

Let us now direct our attention to another point.

From the really admirable old Chronicle of Cologne, great part of which I do not hesitate to reckon among our classical works, and whose author is a most clear-headed and true-hearted man, it appears—indeed it is stated in so many words—that in Cologne, in the thirteenth century, at the time of the war with the Bishops Conrad of Hochstedt and Engelbrecht of Valkenburg, only the fifteen old *gentes* were called citizens, and shared in the government. All the trades were included in the much more numerous communes, which stood in opposition to the *gentes*. But, besides these, there were two other classes of *gentes*, each likewise consisting of fifteen; these *patres minorum gentium* appear as joint possessors of the senatorial dignity, at the time of the Weavers' Revolt, in the year 1369. From 1272 up to this date, the whole internal history of the city is wanting; and hence, we do not see what crisis procured their admission. It certainly was not effected by peaceable means; for the old *gentes* are as heroic, but, at the same time, as stiff-necked and tyrannical as the old Roman patricians.

For my own part, this difference between the two classes forming the sovereign part of the nation, reminds me of the *Edelinge* and *Frilinge*. At some time or other, the German cities received constitutions; and, as the artisans and members of the guilds, were *Lüde*,\* forming no *gentes*, so I conceive the nobles and freemen to have been incorporated into a certain number of *gentes*, to whom the government was committed. Here I suspect a connection with the founding of the cities by the Emperor Henry I.

\* *Leute*, people, men.

He can hardly have driven every ninth man into the cities, which would be absurd ; but, no doubt, commanded every ninth *gens* to remove into the cities, which were then, at least for the most part, as yet only peopled by the *Lüden* and serfs. The *Schlachte* are as essential a portion of the old Germanic national constitution as the *γένη* and *gentes* of the Greek and Italian constitutions. With us, in Dithmarsh, there were thirty of these *Schlachte*, a singular correspondence with the number of the *Curia*, which I should hardly have courage to mention in print. Among these *gentes*, there were some of noble blood, as the Nannes and the Vogdemannes (who may have formerly held the office of Provost\* as a fief), and these contained numerous and distinct families ; others were, probably, simple freemen. On this subject, I can only speak from memory. If I could read our old provincial Code of 1447, now, with the ideas which I have gradually worked out for myself, much would become clear to me. The *gentes* occur also among the Holsten (the Holsteiners), at the end of the thirteenth century, in just the same manner.

The Lombards, as well as the Franks, came in *gentes* from Germany, like the Goths ; Amalungs, Mervungs, Jukungs are *gentes*—like the Achæmenidæ in the East. But the very circumstance of the mention of the *nobili popolani* makes it probable that the Romans also (the *possessores*) were incorporated into *gentes* in the cities by some legislative enactment ; for the *popolo* in Florence is always the *plebs*. Roman *gentes*, too, may even have found place among the *grandi* ; the Donati have not only a Roman name, as a *gens*, but their baptismal names are also Roman. That I regard the *Statuta* as the product of the union of the two nations into one political whole, has, I think, long since been the subject of conversation between us.

The existence of a constitution by *gentes*, and the exclusive possession of the governments by the *gentes*, in Germany, might I believe be proved to hold good of all the cities, if one had books. Strasburg, at all events, altered its constitution

\* Vogt.

from the *gentes*, to the guilds in 1332,—Zurich in 1336,—Aix-la-Chapelle in 1380,—nay, even Nuremberg, but unfortunately only for a short time. Unfortunately, I say, for not only do we all know the detestable oligarchy of the later centuries; but, even in earlier times, the *gentes* were tyrannical, because they had no counterpoise. That came too late, and was the fruit of exasperation. Besides, the *gentes* necessarily grew continually more oligarchical. It was under the government of the guilds, that the arts flourished in Florence and Cologne; (for the nonsense about “the ever-spreading propagation of Roman Art, &c.,” is, as I hear, already on the decline even in Germany).

Müller, who knew nothing of the old German law, is quite contemptible where he treats of Rudolph Brun's revolution; but, the passages which he has quoted with curious misapprehension of their meaning, from the “Letter of Rights,”\* show, that in Zurich, too, there was a class of knights, and two, of citizens capable of exercising the functions of government.

Patronymic names appear as the rule in Italy, from the times of the Emperor Otho (not, however, among the common people), before his date they never occur. Our noble families who are of old descent, have separated themselves off from the *gentes*; with the knightly order, it was quite a different affair. From the time that the latter arose, any one might acquire nobility, by means of the princes; previously, it was only possible by adoption into one of the *gentes*. In Dithmarsh, at least, this was the case; and as I quite give up the idea of a system of castes, I imagine the same to be true of the Romans. The *arrogatio* would necessarily effect this.

There were *gentes* in Metz, and probably in all the cities of Lorraine. The incurable impotence of the communes in France, may arise from the circumstance, that, from the time of their emancipation, they included only communes,† and not burghers, in the old German sense of the word. In Venice, whose whole development sprang from a Roman

\* Richtebriefve der Burgere von Zürich.

† Gemeinde.

root, there was no distinction between burghers and communes, but only burghers, till the closing of the Great Senate.

It should be noted, that the number of the consuls at Florence, and afterwards that of the Anziani, the Priores, the later *buoni huomini*, always bears a relation to the Sestieri of the city (afterwards the guilds), six, twelve, thirty-six, &c. But this was not the case with the one hundred ancient *buoni huomini*; six bears no relation whatever to one hundred. Moreover, the disturbances and revolutions at Milan in the eleventh century are quite explained, when we recognise that the administration belonged exclusively to the Lombards, the Senate exclusively to the Romans. The one party alternately excluded the other.

It is extremely remarkable, that the Chronicle of Cologne contains no historical notices of the city, except the building of churches and convents, prior to the time when it was governed by the guilds,—thus not until 130 years before the Chronicle itself was composed,—except what was taken from larger poems or songs; as in earlier times the story of the fabulous knight Marsilius, perhaps also of St. Maternus,—undoubtedly the tumult against St. Amro, which stands quite isolated; so, in later times, the Bishop's Feud, which has been sung by Gotthard Hagen; then again there is a chasm of a hundred years, up to the Weavers' Insurrection, which also is taken from a poem, and contains long passages in verse. Tell me whether Gotthard Hagen's poem is printed? If not, it were worth while to take some pains to discover, and edit it; a long passage which has been inserted without alteration is somewhat diffuse, but the narrative that has been condensed into prose is very poetical, and reads beautifully. If you succeed in hunting up the book, I recommend you the whole portion from folio 199 *a*, to folio 236 *b*, as reading for a journey. What an analogy with the sources of ancient history! With such books of the fifteenth and sixteenth century in our own language, I should like to nourish my Marcus, and you will do me the greatest kindness if you will, for the future, as you find opportunity to assist

my literary ignorance, procure me lists of the more important productions of this literature, and buy for me whatever you may happen to meet with. In the first place, I should be extremely obliged to you to look out for old editions of the "Four Children of Haymon," and purchase it for me.

The Academy ought to propose prize questions on the old German constitutions; but as this is not to be brought about, I mean at some future time, if I find it possible to scrape together money enough, to propose a prize for a history of the constitution of Cologne, collected from the archives. Write me word if anything has been already written upon it, and also whether a continuation of Schlegel's review has appeared, for I should like to take advantage of the autumn, when one feels here as if risen from the dead, to write an answer to his review and that of Mannert; and, at the same time, to exhibit my theory of the ancient constitution of Rome in a series of propositions.

Do you know the *tabula bilinguis* discovered at Oppido in Lucaniæ, of which copper-plate fac-similes have been inserted in the *Dissertat. isagogicæ ad volum. Herculanensia*? On the one side, stands in Latin a piece of the *sanctio* of a very old Roman law, to which all the magistrates had to swear, when they were installed in their dignity; the other is Oscan, but also in Roman letters. As I am writing an Essay on it for the Academy, I can only tell you under the seal of confidence, that this Oscan inscription is a fragment of a law of the city of Bantia, at the time when it was still a free allied city. Of its contents I can make out very little, but I have discovered some very important points respecting the general analogy of the language. It is, on the whole, sufficiently parallel with the Latin Grammar for us decidedly to pronounce the two languages allied; but it would scarcely be admissible to consider them as two dialects. When we compare it with the Nolan inscription, we find two dialects of one language. Be so kind as to say nothing about the matter to any one, and to let me know if anything has already been written upon the Latin fragment. Latin legal terms occur in the Oscan law, for instance *actud preivatud*

(*actu privato*), and *perum dolom mallo* (*per dolum*, &c.) No such closely allied, thoroughly Latin words occur elsewhere; and from this we may infer that the *socii* adopted the Roman law before they became citizens. Or is the Roman law of much wider Italian origin? I have also been busying myself with the Etruscan, and brought my opinion of the completely foreign nature of this language to a positive certainty.

GENZANO, September 16th, 1818.

My stay in the country, and intercourse with agriculturists, have assisted me to a discovery of which I must instantly send you word, dear Savigny, in the first glow of my delight, as I used to do in those happy days at Berlin. It is not one of those which enable us to catch the whole ground-plan of a labyrinth, and to find our way out of it without thanks to Ariadne. It is no fundamental and parent idea from which a hundred others take their source; but it is uncommonly interesting to the discoverer of the Agrarian Code: it is fitting that it should be his. Indeed, I would fain bring a thank-offering to Terminus, if I only knew how to set about it. But the fear of offending the weak brethren prevents me from even so much as setting before the Capitoline she-wolf that adorns my great saloon, the sacrifice of milk and cakes due to the household goddess on her calends.

That there exists no hand-book of weights and measures, &c. at Rome, is what might be expected. That it is in vain to apply to either men of business or scholars for any information on the subject, is also quite in character with everything else. It happily occurred to me, that, as the French had introduced the system of metres, tables of it must have appeared, in which their weights and measures must be reduced to those in use previous to the Revolution; and that thus it might be possible to institute a comparison between the latter and those of old Rome. I have not, as yet, got any clue to the mode in which the modern measures



of capacity may have been derived from those of antiquity ; there is a mystery here, and the statements of the Roman authors themselves cannot be brought into harmony.

The land measure is called *Rubbio*, and so is the corn measure—the seed of about 640 lbs. of the weight here. There appears in this no connection with antiquity, and yet herein lies my discovery.

It had surprised me to hear from the vine cultivators about Rome, that the *Rubbio* of land was divided into seven *pezze*, because this number nowhere else occurs as a divisor of measures. Still, it seemed to me accidental, or at all events inexplicable. It is of no use to ask any one here for the solution of a riddle. From the seed-corn, I reckoned that the *pezze* must be somewhere about the old *jugurum*. Now, however, I have calculated accurately the square contents of both, and find that the former contains 24,716.42 square feet, and the latter 24,310.21.

Such a difference, after the lapse of 1500 years, is so slight that it may be fully explained by the changes which the standards of measurement must have gradually experienced during the ages of barbarism, just as the *millie* has changed, and the *palma*, which is also not exactly the double of the ancient *palma*. Besides, it is now a square, and it was a parallelogram of two squares.

In all deeds of gift and purchase in the Campagna touching single parcels of ground, there occur, even before Charlemagne, if my memory serve me, *petiae*, which cannot be anything but our *pezze*. *Petia* is a word of the rustic Latin that has been retained in all the Romanic languages—like *camisia*, *parola*, *tornare*, and so many others ; (and, by the way, I wish that some Academy would offer a prize for a lexicon of this dialect of Latin ; there are materials for it existing in a thousand old documents, and in the Romanic dialects). Now, of all historical prejudices, it is one of the most difficult things to convince ourselves at every turn that, in all ages, words have expressed positive, definable ideas, and that all that is vague and obscure about them is the product of our ignorance, though, by the lapse of time, many

may have become interchangeable and uncertain. And if we free ourselves from our mistake to some extent, it still cleaves to us when considering other times and ages, particularly ages of barbarism; and as, no doubt, every one will have understood by *petia* simply *a piece*, and never have thought of inquiring whether land was still measured, no one can reproach me because I, too, did not look for a land measure in it.

Now, the remarkable point is, that seven *jugera*, the plebeian measure of land, are still recognisable in the superficial measure; and therefore it must have remained from the times of the old Romans. Their present name comes from the Latin *rubrum*, of which I cannot state how early it occurs in the Middle Ages. And this brings us back to the ancient Cataster, in which every such hide of land must have been exhibited as a unity, that must have remained in the Registers of estates, and also have been transferred into the Cataster of the Indictions that was practically in force at Rome, at least up to the eighth century. You remember the *capita* of this Cataster which occur in Gaul, and cannot be anything but these hides; in the cases where they occur, they are always waste lands, for which a dispensation is sought from the taxes, which, according to the principle of solidarity established in the communes, were to be borne by those capable of paying them. *Rubrum* is a very suitable expression for such a piece of land.

Now the corn measure has been formed by taking the average quantity of seed required by a *Rubrum*, as a unity, and dividing it into quarters and sixteenths. This drove the old *modius* quite out of use; it is, indeed, inconceivable how the old Romans should have reckoned by such an extremely small unity, just as they did with their money. As one passage appears to prove, it was the third of a cubic foot, and the whole system of the Roman weights and measures exhibits striking indications of a mathematical basis. The *millie* of 1000 paces bears an evident relation to a degree of the meridian; and, in all probability, the latter determined the length of the pace and the foot, which

again determined, on the one hand, the land measure, and, on the other, the measure of capacity,—for the *amphora* was a cubic foot, and upon its divisions all the other measures are based. (From the *Sextarius* of seed, I derive the *Stajolo* of the present land measure, though the latter is considerably smaller.) All these are circumstances which make it more and more difficult to believe in the barbarism of the Romans.

It is only among the vineyards that you still find the *pezze*; and, indeed, this is the only sort of property which partially remains in the hands of small proprietors; the *latifundia* are divided according to seed. But by the *Rubbio* it is easy to reckon the proportion between the number which it now supports, and that which it supported when held by the old plebeians. *Campo morto*, one of the estates belonging to the Patrimony of St. Peter, lying between here and the lake, is let to a farmer. It contains 4309 *Rubbi*, or about 4400 plebeian hides. We will suppose half of it to have been forest or common land—for the old Romans were not so wise as our rural economists, who parcel out everything:—thus 2200 families would live on this estate. Now, it supports—1. The farmer-general with his family, in great comfort. 2. The rent constitutes the revenue of about thirty Canons, many of whom save out of their incomes, but as others receive pensions in addition, we will set the latter against the former. 3. On the land itself there live about a hundred labourers, nearly all unmarried. 4. In the spring, a few hundred labourers come to weed for a few days, and in the summer, five hundred come from Abruzzo to get in the harvest for eleven days' food and wages. The rural economist will say how many useless hands he spares! and the pious must rejoice that, instead of 2200 families of heathens, thirty gentlemen now live upon the land, who sing mass while the rest listen to them. It is an interesting fact, that as far as the Lombards prevailed, the *mezzaiuoli* system subsists, and utterly different measures of corn and land, which appear to bear no relation at all to the ancient; but to be of German origin with names borrowed from antiquity. The Lombards measured by *sceffila* and King Eliprand's

foot (*pied du roi*). All the baronial property in the Suburbicarian province is diabolical usurpation of the barons. There exists a fragment, of the 12th century, about the usurpations of the Frangipani at Terracina. In the Middle Ages, Rome stood as far below the other cities in proportion as she does now. Seven *jugera* must have been amply sufficient to support an industrious family, for I know a *vignarol* who has hired eleven *pezze*, taking half the produce, and is able to feed and clothe himself and his wife and children very comfortably.

A few words in confirmation of my hypothesis respecting the origin of the municipal constitutions of Italy. Villani says expressly, that, when the Lombard Empire was broken up, the Lombard *gentes* of lords, barons, and citizens remained, and that, in his day, certain old nobles were called *Cattani Lombardi* (ii, c. 11). To these Cattani belonged the *Buondelmonti* who were bannerets in Contado (iv, c. 35). This *gens* was the head of the Guelfs, as the Uberti, settlers from the time of Otho, were of the Ghibellines. The Chronicle of Cologne calls the Ghibellines *Gyvelingen*, and says of both parties, that they had distinguished themselves from each other by costume, masonic tokens, nay, even by their mode of husbandry.

Villani's earliest statements taken from genuine native chronicles, do not reach further back than 250 years before his time, and are very meagre; it is not till much later that they become fuller. All that is said respecting the beginning of the chronicles is legendary, in the style of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, to the destruction of ancient Florence and its restoration under Charlemagne. But by his account of its ancient boundaries, and in the modern streets belonging to that part, we can still recognise the regular division and parcelling out of the colonial city, with its *Decumanus* and *Cardo*, its four gates, &c. He possessed, without understanding it, an old Chronicle, in which reference was made to an ancient plan bearing the *sigilla* of the *agrimensores*; nor do I too myself understand what he says about it. He confounds the restoration of the walls razed

by the Lombards, with a rebuilding of the city itself. I write all this to you, because there is no one here whom it would interest. About 1320 a papal legate destroyed Recanati, and justified himself on the ground that its inhabitants invoked heathen deities. . . .

ROME, June 19th, 1819.

In Tivoli, I not only looked about me for antiquities, and found all sorts of remains, nowhere mentioned,—among which there are some substructures belonging to a very ancient time,—but also made some researches into the history of the city, from the Middle Ages onwards. Tivoli is one of the cities which have not only never received any Lombard elements, but have also never been subject to barons; where, consequently, the later Roman constitution could last the longest, and even when the forms universal throughout Italy were introduced, they were only outwardly assumed. I have found, in the archives of the city and in a private library, copies of a Code of later date than 1257, in which year the city submitted to the Roman senate; but not, as the people there think, of the year 1305, when I believe it to have been only reformed in some details. This Code was printed in 1522, but must be excessively rare, as, according to the preface, only a hundred copies were printed. The oldest magistrate in Tivoli, whose office existed before the subjugation, and was continued, at least nominally, up to the year preceding the Revolution, is the *Caput militiæ*, evidently the same as the *Magister militiæ*. He is, in all respects, the head of the republic, and even hears appeals, which he decides after consulting or delegating his power to a *judex* belonging to the corporation of the *judices*. He can compel obedience by fines, watches over the finances of the city, convenes the Senate, brings subjects before it for consideration, &c.

Before the city was subject to Rome, the actual administration of justice in the lower court seems to have belonged to the *Sedialis*. After that epoch, Rome sends a *Comes*

every six months, whose office, duties, and suite are regulated upon the model of the *podestà* in the Lombard towns. But it is peculiar to Tivoli that the *Sedialis* (probably the ancient *Dativus*) retains office by his side, has a concurrent jurisdiction, watches his proceedings, and that from both, there is an appeal to the *Caput militiæ*. The latter is assisted by eight councillors and a Great Council; for which an equal number is taken from each of the four *Contratæ*. The distribution of all offices proceeds upon this basis. When laws are to be modified or repealed, the *Caput militiæ* and his Lesser Council summon thirty citizens from each *Contrata*, and the matter is decided by votes. Nobles are mentioned; but they have no privileges whatever (the names, even up to the thirteenth century, are the later Roman, and there are scarcely any family names). Ten corporations are named, but have no political significance. It is the *Contrata* who are brought forward on all occasions. One of the corporations is that of the *tabelliones*, who are very important persons in the State. The retiring magistrates and functionaries, and also the *Comes*, must give an account of their conduct before *Syndices*, and are amenable to any one. We have precisely the same thing, with the same name, in the Florentine *Statuta*. (Do you or does the Royal Library possess this extremely important book, in three quarto volumes?) The Code of Tivoli consists of five books. The first contains the *jus publicum*; the second, rules of court, and some peculiar regulations of the civil law;—the rules of court seem to me, so far as a laic (and without any books at hand) can form a judgment, to be in all respects the later Roman, visibly compiled from life and practice;—the third contains criminal law—a late reformation, dating from the beginning of the fifteenth century, and made much more rigorous; the fourth and fifth relate to police. I have read this Code with real delight; the old part of it is so thoroughly intelligent and free. It is a great pity that there is no copy of it to be got!

The city must have been extraordinarily flourishing at that time. I had already remarked, with all the

Lombard and Tuscan towns, that, at the beginning of the Middle Ages, their extent much exceeded that of Rome: the same holds good of Tivoli. All the Latin towns were very small indeed, as is the case with Tibur; in the good times, the people lived in their own farmhouses—were *Tiburtini rustici*, like the *Romani rustici*; in later times, the villas ate up the farmhouses, and yet the towns remained desolate. It is, moreover, very singular how, from the time of Augustus, numerous petty towns spring up again in Latium, but with a population of publicans, small shopkeepers, and all kinds of rabble. The boundaries of the ancient Tibur can be pretty nearly made out; though it is a thousand pities to see how all records have been, and are still, suffered to go to decay. I have discovered where the *arx* was; the spot is still called, as it was in 1200, *Castel Vecchio*, over the old cascade; for this, too, has quite changed its place. In the Middle Ages, suburbs sprang up round the city, which were enclosed within a wall, under the Emperor Frederic the First. I could tell you much more about the ancient prosperity of the town and its destruction, and about the changes made in the constitution, from the fifteenth century onwards, by the papal government—of the misery and depravity of its present unhappy inhabitants; and you would rather read this than what more I have to write to you; but I must forbear. Only two points more:—Firstly. Of the territory appertaining to the city, which, even according to the Cataster of 1537, was in the exclusive possession of natives, and much subdivided, three-quarters now belongs to foreigners, and the remaining quarter is in the hands of a small number of wealthy and most odious individuals. Secondly. The idea that Rome was not republican in the Middle Ages is quite false. Even when only one senator remains there, he has his Great and Little Council, *Capita regionum*, &c. &c., without consulting whom, he cannot legally do anything dangerous. But the might of the barons rendered this powerless, and ruined the city. One thing more which I had nearly forgotten. The tribunal of the *Comes* is called

the *Curia*, and so is the tribunal of the barons everywhere in the Campagna.

I am at work on a treatise for the Academy, on the historical acquisitions to be derived from the Armenian Eusebius. In extent, these acquisitions are of no great importance; it is a ridiculous piece of quackery to print a whole quarto volume, in which, beyond the miserable treatises of Eusebius himself on the chronology of the Old Testament (with whose contents, moreover, we were already acquainted), there are not above ten chapters which we did not possess before in the Greek Excerpts, and here and there some small *addenda*. A few sheets would have amply sufficed for everything. For the Second Book there is nothing new at all. But in these new chapters and additions there are splendid things, of which Mai, as usual, has not even understood the value, though overflowing with delight at his discovery. The most confused and fragmentary epoch of the history of the Seleucidæ becomes clear and complete. This is what I expected would be the real value of the discovery, about which I did not delude myself, as I knew pretty well what it could yield. There are some additions, too, for the Macedonian history after Alexander, and some very fine things from Berosus, furnished by Alexander Polyhistor. This opportunity, which affords us a real historical basis for the earliest history of Central Asia, ought to be embraced to elucidate Herodotus, and cover him with fresh glory. Mai, as I have said, did not know how to make any use of it; and as, in spite of our far-famed German profundity, things might not be much better with us, I am including the whole in an essay which will be finished in about three weeks. . . . .

ROME, May 23rd, 1822.

. . . . . That I read your book \* immediately, from beginning to end, it is needless to say; and yet I must say it; and likewise that it answers my expectations. . . . .

\* "The History of Roman Law during the Middle Ages."



You have opened a new world to me, and I believe to all your readers, by your account of academical institutions in the Middle Ages. For this very reason I have nothing to say to you on that subject, but turn to other topics which are not quite so foreign to me; first, because it is the shortest, to the Turinese Gloss.

That this was written under the Exarchs (as may be seen, moreover, upon the very face of the work) is clearly evident from No. 9; for the Exarchs were likewise *patricii*, and are so called by the Latin authors; at Rome, these appointed *tutores* in those cases in which, at Constantinople, the Emperor himself appointed them. And this was certainly the case before Alexandria was lost in A.D. 640 (No. 11). The passage No. 199 has decidedly not been copied from Isidor. The scholiast had no need to refer to such a source; he knew more *jus* than the encyclopædizing Goth.

I am quite convinced of the justice of your general views respecting the constitution of the towns: and here I can again furnish you with parallels. You have incontestably established the existence of the three classes, to my perfect satisfaction. This, however, has reminded me, that, according to the Chronicle of Cologne, out of the five-and-forty *gentes* of which the corporation of that city originally consisted (the rest of the inhabitants belonged only to the commonalty), in early times, the first fifteen alone were eligible to take part in the Senate or Government, although there was, too, a General Assembly of all the burgesses. Here, likewise, I clearly perceive three classes; for the existence of two classes,—one of fifteen, a second of thirty *gentes*—is quite impossible in early times. I believe you agree with me on this point: a close observation of antiquity certainly yields this result, whether others understand it or not. Now, Scipione Ammirato says expressly, that there were at Florence, prior to the revolutions, seventy-two *Schiatte*; that *Schiatte*, in German *Schlacht*, means *gens* is evident (in Dithmarsh the *gentes* were called *Schlachte*); and here we have again a number, which, divided by three, yields a characteristic four-and-twenty. The *popolani*, the

third class, are reckoned among the nobles by the Florentines; and if now and then they are called *plebs*, I do not attach the least importance to it. The parties of the Guelphs and Ghibellines were, according to the express testimony of the old Florentines, confined to the *Schiatte*; that is, in the first instance.

I cannot give you the references in proof of this to-day, because I have not read the books for years, and have no time, indeed I must say no strength to search for them; but, in the meanwhile, you will no doubt rely upon the fact, that I am in the habit of reading carefully; and if you wish to pursue the subject further, I will look them out for you another time. For the present, I will give you all my opinions in a short compass; the hypothetical and the positive mixed up together, as I may venture to do with you.

As I have myself found in Dithmarsh the *Schlachte* limited to the number of thirty, when there was nothing like a municipality, and Dithmarsh was a rural district\* (*Thietmers Gowe*), I conjecture that, in the *Gauen*, the nobles and freemen were comprehended in a fixed number of *gentes*—in *Curia*. Each *gens* had its name, as the *Giunkungs*, &c., and its heraldic bearings.

Thus, too, in the Roman towns in Germany, as soon as the Germans of the surrounding district began to settle within them, the new comers were collected into fixed *gentes*,—of which, perhaps, the actual nobles formed a third,—without thereby trenching upon the rights of the freemen. The Roman citizens remained excluded, indeed so were even the Germans who had not been adopted into a *gens*; for as the *gentes* in Dithmarsh had this right of affiliation, I do not see why it should not have been universal.

These inhabitants who were not citizens composed the commonalty; and as, in old times, a mass of human beings could not be conceived of as existing without a corporation, so they had theirs also; the Romans their Decurionate; and side by side with this stood the Guilds, which naturally contained persons of mixed origin.

\* Gau.

No doubt the Lombards likewise assembled themselves in their towns according to *gentes*, but there was some epoch, probably under the Emperor Otho, when the towns not only received similar constitutions, but also new *gentes*, especially of Germans (why not provincial families as well?); so that the number of the *gentes* was increased, as we have just seen it at Florence, where it amounted to seventy-two.

These corporations had no affinity with the Roman decurional constitution, and the Roman population forms *il commune*, the commonalty. In Florence, we find, from the earliest times, the seven guilds, which are certainly quite Roman, and whose number, perhaps not accidentally, reminds us of the seven old guilds at Rome.

The cities of Italy as political bodies, in the eleventh, twelfth, and earlier part of the thirteenth centuries, are simply these *gentes*; that is, these alone are the moving, exciting, governing power in them; and the franchise is confined to the burgesses, *i. e.* the *gentes*, while the decurional senate of the *buoni huomini* none the less enjoyed its own administration and jurisdiction. The extension of political power, or, if you choose it so, the sovereignty to the commonalty, is denominated, at least at Florence, *far il popolo*, and the union of both elements, *il popolo*.

It is possible that I may have written something like this to you years ago, but I think scarcely in so connected a form. The union was effected everywhere in Italy in an extremely rough and unskilful manner; with much more dexterity in many of the German Imperial towns, where the relations [between the orders] were precisely the same; and, besides, the German nobles were much more honourable and obedient to the laws than the Italian ones, who allowed themselves the most criminal license, while the burgher class were also a worthless set. For Italy has been an infernal pool, from the Middle Ages to the present time, as it was from the Empire to the Middle Ages. It is a strange thing how any one can get up an enthusiasm for the Italian Republics.\* . . . .

\* The remainder of this letter will be found in vol. ii. p. 232.

ON

## THE PERIODS OF GENIUS IN LITERATURE.\*

THAT the appearance of genius, consequently of excellence, in literature and art, is with every nation limited to certain periods, on the termination of which its flame goes out, was remarked even by the Roman men of letters, and had probably been perceived still earlier by intelligent Greeks of the post-Alexandrian times. That the great men of the golden age of Greece, whose works have been preserved to us, never dreamt that, when they were gone, a reign of darkness would ensue, was inevitable. But our consciousness of the treasures we possess in our own literature has already ceased to be an unclouded joy; experience, repeated in many forms since the decline of Greece, teaches us the transitory nature of this blessing; and while the observation of our present state, and of the future already looming on our horizon, brings home the melancholy certainty that we are beginning to decline, it leads us to the contemplation—fruitless it must be confessed—of the causes of this mournful alternation.

He who should attempt to illustrate it, by comparing it with the vicissitudes of the seasons and the successive stages of human life, would not be wrong, nor speak empty words; but this is no explanation, and it gives us a more painful and humiliating sense of the irresistible necessity of fate than we can well bear. For the question still arises, whether the State does not, in this respect too, occupy the place of

\* This essay, which unfortunately was never completed, appears to have been written in 1810 or 1812, and intended for the Academy of Sciences. It was published in the *Nachgelassene Schriften*, p. 399.

the physician, who cannot indeed create any powers, but who can stimulate and direct those already existing; and whether the preservation and nourishment of intellectual life does not form a political problem as well as an individual vocation?

It appears as if our governments took this view; for, although a lower aim of education may perhaps in practice hover vaguely before the minds of most, the general tendency of our public educational institutions can scarcely owe its origin to a less worthy impulse, and the existence of assemblies like the present is certainly a testimony that such is the case.

It must be granted that illustrious periods exist through the presence of illustrious individuals; and it will one day be universally recognised, that as innumerable races of men exist, each having its peculiar, well-defined characteristics, and its own ideal of perfection, so, in each of these races, there is an infinite series in the perfection of the individuals, from the Ideal to the lowest grade of degeneracy.

We will not here inquire into the causes of this diversity; to us it is a fact. Meanwhile, we wish, in passing, to vindicate the intellectual, as much as the physical differences of the races of mankind, and attempt to mark their characteristics, for they are as universal and as necessary. In saying which, we by no means deny or overlook the, often immense, capacity for culture and readiness to receive impressions; but still firmly maintain that these have bounds which cannot be exceeded.

Thus, too, it instantly strikes us as probable that the appearance of eminent men in unusual number and of extraordinary powers, is what distinguishes and favours one age above another; still, we can hardly consider this a sufficient explanation of the extent of the difference between enlightened and benighted centuries. We should rather be inclined to maintain that no race can be wholly without great men of its own peculiar kind, though they may indeed be concealed in obscurity or prevented from developing their powers.

If we may, at least typically, and perhaps more than typically, conceive of all intellectual activity as the creation and governing of a world of ideas, then intellectual power would consist in the vividness and complete development of

these ideas, and in the control that the mind to which they belong exercises over them. And the healthiness and fertility of the mind would consist in its possessing none but living and energetic ideas capable of reproduction, and no stunted, withered, or still-born ideas.

There is no branch of intellectual activity that has not in different ages shot up from its root with great vigour, or continued to exist, for a time, as a withered trunk without a root.

Thus the Indians, and perhaps, after their own fashion, a far greater number of nations than we are aware of, make use of astronomical formulæ, the principle of which they do not in the least understand; thus, in the Middle Ages, the art of surveying was a mere unintelligent application of formulæ. It has been the same with poetry in many ages, and even with history.

He, all whose thoughts are to him living and present realities, fills the world that lies within his sphere with his own spirit, and, in this his world, he creates, after ideals that he has himself originated: in him all is light—and such were the Greeks of the golden age. But this is possible, only so long as men live from within and for the present; for in this way it is I think possible that each should create his world of ideas entirely for himself.

This is a state of innocence, and the true golden age; in which men are only important in virtue of the relations of the heart, and those in which they stand to their immediate contemporaries; but are of little consequence as historical beings, and of absolutely none as regards matters of opinion. It is the age in which forms, as such, have no power whatever. The philosopher surveys the universe as it appears to him, without having an authoritative pattern before his mind's eye,—the poet sings as his heart prompts him, and supplies him with rhythms.

He really thinks who thinks freely; not he who allows himself what is prohibited—where the very allurements of the prohibition often lends attraction to what is bad—but he who knows no outward law.

The Greek literature alone has existed in such an autonomy, and that did so for a long period; moreover, in its history, we are able distinctly to trace the progress of its decay.

During the centuries of its glory, it successively assumed various shapes, as freer and more varied forms suggested and perfected themselves; but its character remained identical from Homer to Sophocles, Thucydides, and Plato.

The decline of poetry commenced in the age of Sophocles (he himself was not affected by the change), owing to the following causes, which always appear as the earliest and mightiest, wherever literary genius declines or is extinguished.

Standing forms and mannerisms had come into use, which people took to be the law and essence of beauty, instead of recognising that living beauty had created these forms for itself. With these they attempted to demonstrate the aim to be reached. Thus did Euripides. In an earlier age, he would have been a didactic poet, with credit to himself, and perhaps a not discreditable epic poet of the second rank; but he aspired to write tragedies, and produced miserable things, though he satisfied himself and part of the public, because he filled up the prescribed forms, and not unskilfully.

It is possible, nay, it has already happened, that a free poetic spirit has created forms for itself, which, ere the poet has completed the half of his career, have had the same effect upon him as if he had adopted them from others; whereas, he ought to have been careful to cast them away, when, from a garment, they became a trammel.

The second calamity was the formation of a public, which the author, consciously or unconsciously, placed above himself, and strove to please. In the earlier times, the hearers understood their proper place, and the sage thought it no robbery to reign over them. It was from similar causes that, at the same epoch, distinguished men, whose pre-eminence was fully and reverentially recognised, often and easily made themselves tyrants, and that in later times, as

literary refinement became general, demagogues arose. A public, whether it be that of an Athenian theatre, or of a sophist's school, or the reading world, or, finally, fashionable society, or coteries of ladies, infallibly lowers the tone of an author who condescends to try to please it; it is the old German proverb, that the learned are brought to trial and the unlearned sit as judges.

The third cause was the stormy times, from which a good citizen would not, nor could easily seclude himself (although Socrates and his disciples did so), but was shaken by their tempests to the very depths of his being. He who did not enter on the Peloponnesian war with a mind already thoroughly formed and matured, had little opportunity, even during its earlier years, to collect his thoughts; and, after the terrible disasters in Sicily, all must have felt that they were losing the power of thought. This vanishing of thought is a fact which deserves to be pondered, both in the case of individuals and of nations.

At this epoch, the youth, as they attained manhood, became less and less able to live from within; on the contrary, they lived wholly in what was passing around them, as passive spectators, anxiously awaiting the future. And here we touch upon a cause that has had a mischievous influence in all ages, and often so great as entirely to stifle all literary genius. Yet, for a time, genius transformed this obstacle into weapons for itself; namely, during the age of the orators. Afterwards, however, it died out utterly in the irretrievable humiliation and degradation of the State; for where there is no gaiety and no enjoyment of life, there can be no vigour and art in speech or thought, even where there is not the immediate restraint of external tyranny.

In this depressed state, ever reminded of its own impotency,—occupied with the incidents of a time, when the battle was between forces, around which no human interest could gather,—becoming more and more estranged from the primitive mental impulse,—at the same time, stifled by the erudition now rapidly advancing, and deluded by the belief that forms would enable men to carry to perfection those branches of



oratory to which all effort was limited,—the literature of Greece became extinct. What Greek literature arose at the end of the first century, and at Rome, was mere book-learning. If, at all times, the form killeth, so much the more when the form is foreign. Hence the literature of Rome was in a certain sense still-born; and only those who wrote as statesmen rivalled the Greeks of the same class, because, in prose, the form altogether presses less heavily: there were, too, a few among the poets who sang from a genuine impulse.

The Romans had no philosophy, because they merely acquired all systems of philosophy,—began at the time when everything was ready to their hand, and believed that the systems already elaborated were sufficient.

That they were completely under the dominion of laws, was the reason why no really native literature took its rise among them.

The influence of language. Where the vernacular language is itself only a jargon and barbarous, and it is treated barbarously, there is nothing to be done with it.

1. This the cause at Constantinople.

2. Calamitous times.

3. Limitation by religion.

4. Imitation.

5. Scantiness or absence of fresh sources. The injurious influence of even voluntarily assumed forms in modern literature. . . . .

## THE AGE OF MARCUS ANTONINUS AND ITS LITERATURE.\*

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. . . . . A correspondence of the Consular Fronto with three Emperors reminded us of that of the younger Pliny with Trajan, and led us to hope for historical notices of equal value; an expectation which would have still been excited, even without the additional announcement of orations, that seemed likely to exhibit civil jurisprudence, at the date of its utmost perfection, in its application to cases occurring in actual life. Many other circumstances concurred to raise our expectations. Fronto was reckoned a classical writer by the later Roman authors, and however lightly we may esteem their own testimony and judgment, still the age of the Antonines, like the golden and silver ages of literature that preceded it, might have bequeathed to them a verdict correct in itself, though blindly accepted by them. In the literary conversations which Gellius has set down, Fronto appears as a well-read and sagacious grammarian. Expectations of a different nature were excited by his intimate relations with Marcus Antoninus, and the influence which the latter ascribes to his intercourse with his beloved preceptor, on the developement of his own character; an influence indicating qualities, of which no trace could be found or hoped for in the Greek rhetoricians of that age (regarded by them as the era of the revival of eloquence), and which a corres-

\* From an "Essay on the Writings of M. Cornelius Fronto, discovered at Milan," written in 1816, for the Academy of Sciences, and published in the Second Volume of Niebuhr's *Kleine Schriften*, p. 52. The portions here omitted merely contain criticisms on the mode in which Mai had edited the then newly-discovered Manuscript of Fronto.

pondence was particularly calculated to exhibit. That our expectations have been disappointed, is already confessed by our mode of enumerating them.

The newly discovered writings of Fronto add nothing to our historical knowledge, the intrinsic worth of their contents is slight, and we are unable to discover what grace of diction it can have been, that raised Fronto to the rank of a classical author, in the estimation of his contemporaries. Before the re-appearance of Fronto, we possessed only three Latin authors of the age of the Antonines, and these so dissimilar in style that one can hardly name them together without a smile,—Apuleius, Gellius, and Minucius Felix (for the last belongs to this age, and not to that of Severus). Apuleius was about the same age as Fronto; the two others are younger, and speak of him with the reverence which public opinion imposed as a law. But the grammarian and the rhetorician, no less than that bright poetical mind, are incomparably more intellectual and elegant than he. However, it is not accidental that so extremely little has come down to us of the Roman literature of that age; it is clear that for a whole century—from Suetonius to Marius Maximus—no historical work was composed in the Latin language; and no remembrance has been preserved of a single poet of that interval. This is all the more singular, as the extant Greek literature of the same period presents an exuberance of wealth. The first half of the third century is rendered illustrious by the great masters of jurisprudence, and during its whole course, the paucity of Latin writers is, perhaps, less striking than in the second century, but they have become perfectly barbarous, and so they continue until after the middle of the fourth century. Then comes an after-summer of Roman literature, and we cannot hesitate to confess that literature was more flourishing under Theodosius than under Marcus Antoninus.

To attempt to assign the causes of the decline and revival of a literature is a bold undertaking; yet it is difficult to refrain from all efforts to render the immediate occasions of such remarkable phenomena intelligible to ourselves. From

the time that Rome became the theatre of Greek as well as Latin literature, it seems as if the balance of excellence had continually vibrated between the two, to the alternate disadvantage of the one or the other.

Under the so-called twelve Cæsars, the literature of Greece had fallen to a very low ebb, notwithstanding the favour shown at Court to the Greek sophists; and the promotion of the use of the language at Court, by the freedmen—to whom it was more or less their mother tongue, while Latin at all events was not so—gained some outward advantages and the homage of aristocratic ignorance, even for bad Greek authors of that date. In the seventh century (A. U. C.), ancient Greece and Greek Asia were utterly ruined; and the Roman sway was of such a kind, that not even the inexhaustible creative and restorative energies of Nature in those regions, could enable the Greeks to surmount their misery, or forget it, in the course of the following century. Hence, all their mental powers were visibly crippled; and, with the exception of the Athenian schools of philosophy, not a voice is audible in Greek literature for several generations.

It was not until the latter half of the first century of our era, that a new school of literature established itself, which, though it would be inadmissible to place it beside that of an earlier time, has been not undeservedly transmitted to us in numerous authors, and maintains no contemptible rank.

While Greek literature was thus obscured, that of Rome was more than usually brilliant; for, to estimate it properly, we must remember that we possess only three authors of the very rich period from Tiberius to Nero inclusively, one of whom, Velleius Paterculus, who is certainly not inferior in intellect to any historian of his style, is only mentioned by one ancient grammarian. This entitles us to presume that Aufidius Bassus, Servilius Nomianus, Domitius Afer, and other authors honourably named by their successors, must have possessed no slight degree of genuine excellence. Nay, however many and various are the faults ascribed to Curtius, his work, which belongs incontestably to the reign

of Vespasian, still bears the impress of an age of genuine literary activity.

Indeed, the reign of that monarch was pre-eminently rich—more so, perhaps, than any other period of Roman history—in youths and men who developed great talents, or employed them actively where they were already mature. The convulsions amid which the inflexible general raised himself to the throne, seem to have furnished a wholesome stimulus and excitement to the nation; for, at that time, it was still possible in Italy to speak of a Roman *nation*. The state of morals, and of the constitution which grew up under him, was a golden age to that under the insane tyrants who had ruled after Tiberius—comparatively, even, a return to freedom. Yet the seers of those times felt what Tacitus expresses in its application to a particular topic, in his “Dialogue on the Decay of Eloquence:”—that where the masculine intellect wants the nourishment of public affairs, and is deprived of all share in their forms, it pines, though it may look outwardly healthy; and the bloom of literature is but an artificial production.

The reign of Domitian might serve as a proof, were one needed, that a despot's love for letters, even when prompted by taste and intelligence, and his liberality to the authors who please him, are of little benefit to the Muses, while tyranny brings irreparable ruin on literature. For many years, those, whose lives the tyrant had not taken, had looked on in rigid horror at his misdeeds, and felt their slavery, while unable even to entertain the thought of breaking their chains; and when their fetters broke, they could not at once shake off the effects of their long sufferings. They had indeed lost only their happiness and power of enjoyment, and none of their excellence, which perhaps had even been carried to greater perfection, like that of noble fruits and juices by the frost. But in the youthful life of the rising generation, to whom they, as they quitted earth, bequeathed the literary fame of their nation, these fifteen frightful years of death had created a chasm, which we must account as one of the principal

causes why literature suddenly went out like a lamp, under Hadrian.

Under Trajan, the revived Greek literature of which Dio and Plutarch were the heads, begins to create a wide-spread opinion in its favour, and under Hadrian it surpasses in consequence the Roman, whose decay gives such weight to the preference of the sovereign for the former, that the latter falls into complete prostration. And now the Roman literature suddenly dries up, as we have already noticed. During the century between Tiberius and Trajan, no Greek wrote the living history of his own day, though it was written by many Romans, whose peculiar vocation, indeed, it was; during the following, not one Roman writes history, but many Greeks.

It was probably injurious to the Roman authors that they lived in the metropolis, whose government was not the soul of a mighty body, but the fly-wheel of an enormous machine,—in a soulless present, which would not suffer itself to be forgotten; while the Greek retired into the past, and into the antiquity of his country.

A State can no more than a single human being reach its individual consciousness and development except by means of its relation with the external world. At that time, the Roman Empire had no external relations except those of conquest and defence on its remote frontiers. Thus its internal condition grew more and more lifeless. The forms, which seemed to perpetuate the old times, were an empty opera spectacle, burdensome and humiliating to all who took part in them. In many Greek cities which, like Rhodes, had preserved their local institutions, the old life continued to exist in a far more genuine manner. In Rhodes, up to the earthquake in the reign of Antoninus Pius, the memory of the days of her naval dominion was preserved in freshness by the trophies, as well as by the monuments and the constitution. Greece, too, however she might be plundered of her moveable works of art, still retained those monuments which could not be carried away, and could scarcely be injured, by the hand of man; while at Rome, under Nero,

and in the civil war which followed him, almost all outline of the ancient city, with all its monuments, was annihilated.

Finally, the language in which the Greek wrote was his mother tongue, while most of the Latin writers, from the time of Trajan downwards, were provincials, who learnt Latin like a foreign language. Apuleius confesses as much of himself, and we cannot doubt that it was no less the case with Fronto than with him. Fronto again, in one fragment, ridicules a Gallic orator, who had studied in Athens Dorocortoro (Rheims). Such provincials transported themselves to an artificial point of view, when they regarded Rome as their father-land.

What Goethe says about the causes of the inanity of German poetry at the commencement of the eighteenth century,—that it was not the talent, but the living material, that was wanting,—is true in an infinitely higher degree of the Roman literature of this period. There was no internal, no external political life; the wars might be remarkable for great disasters and brilliant victories, but could never stir the heart; internal political developement was impossible; the State and religion had become hollow forms, their kernel was quite gone; poetry and philosophy never dreamt that they could rise above learning and imitation. The only really living materials were furnished by the Roman jurisprudence, which was placed in an advantageous light by the boundlessness of the empire, and the forms of the State; and as inspired poetry, eloquence, and history have succeeded each other in due relation to the progressive life of nations and States, so, under the Antonines, the science of Roman jurisprudence rose into lustre, and Genius found a home within it.

With respect to the old Roman literature, a singular contrast exists between this and the preceding age. We already knew from Gellius, and it is confirmed by the writings of Fronto, that, at this period, the authors of the Augustan age were by no means preferred to those of earlier date, while it is clear that, in Seneca's day, the old books were never read at all, but only those of the so-called

golden age, and of contemporaries. Quintilian affords direct confirmations of this statement, and no one, who is familiar with Tacitus and the younger Pliny, can fail to perceive that the same taste continued to prevail among the great men under Trajan. But it would be very erroneous to consider this return to the ancients as a good sign.

It is difficult to divine what caused this change,—as the date of which we may take Hadrian's reign,—besides the grammatical tendency of the learned Emperor himself, which, however, was no doubt that of his age. It might be, that emulation was aroused by the Greek philologists; or, perhaps, and not improbably, that every one read only in order to collect phrases, sayings, and peculiar idioms. Fronto recommends, and Marcus Antoninus reads, Ennius, Plautus, Lælius, Nævius, Laberius, Cato, Sallust, Coelius; Horace is laid on one side, and Virgil, like Livy and all the other great authors of the first century, is not even named. Against Seneca and Lucan the rhetorician inveighs with contempt. It is equally difficult to determine, when that classification as to excellence of the Roman literature was first accepted, which we find existing at the restoration of learning in the West, and which prevailed, as long as this literature occupied the first rank, to the exclusion of that of Greece,—a classification, to which it must be ascribed, that precisely these books and no others have been preserved; it must, however, have been introduced before Symmachus, for in him and his successors traces of it may be clearly pointed out.

To this description of the state of Roman literature, at a time when Fronto could pass for a great writer, may I be permitted to add a few notices of the succeeding times? A thoroughly well-informed observer has told me, that after the Antonines, art, which had been preserved in all its perfection up to that period, suddenly becomes extinct, and gives place to barbarism. I believe this fact must be attributed to the misery which, even under Marcus Antoninus, began to desolate the Roman world. The first



lastingly unfortunate wars of the world-wide Empire,—the anxious presentiment of its decline,—the perception that all depended on the maintenance of its frontiers, and that if these were once broken through, the inner countries must fall a helpless prey,—this consciousness of approaching and inevitable danger must have caused an oppressed state of feeling, in which neither literature nor art could flourish. But as early as the reign of Marcus Antoninus, that fearful pestilence began to spread abroad which consumed whole Roman armies, and swept over at least Asia, Greece, and Italy. Of all the plagues that can befall a country, none so completely breaks its spirit for several succeeding generations, as a general pestilence; of which the influence of the Black Death, in the fourteenth century, on the literature of Germany and Italy is a striking example. I much doubt whether this epidemic ever quite died out in the Roman Empire, during the hundred years that followed its first outbreak; it certainly often reappeared. Soon after the death of Marcus Antoninus, we find the commencement of that boundless extortion of money, and intolerable taxation, which brought distress and misery on the whole world,—of the rule of mere military emperors, followed by the partition of the Empire, the internecine wars between the provinces, and the ravages of the barbarians. Thus literary culture was necessarily rooted out, and barbarism established; for at the same time all those causes continued to operate which had brought literature into decay, even while the external political relations of the Empire were prosperous. Under Aurelian, external safety at least was restored, and then literature, too, gradually recovered breath. But now again we see that, after Julian's reign, the Roman literature became prominent to the detriment of the Greek, for two of the greatest writers of the Theodosian age, Ammianus and Claudianus, were Greeks by birth. Thus Greek intellect now enriched the Roman literature, as, at an earlier time, the Romans of genius found more satisfaction when they wrote in the Greek language.

I shall now give an account of the separate writings

published in this collection, and, in conclusion, exhibit what may be regarded as our historical gain from them.

I. The first work is a very small book of letters to Antoninus Pius, with some answers from that sovereign. In form, these exactly resemble the letters interchanged between Trajan and Pliny, but their contents are limited to congratulations on the part of the senator, and friendly replies from the Emperor; the most extensive letter, to the subject of which one of the fragments also refers, concerns a friend who had made Fronto one of his joint-heirs, and who had expressed himself in his last testament disrespectfully towards the Emperor, and violently against the Prefect of the Prætorium, Gavius Maximus; probably he had passed over both in his will, and assigned his enmity with the latter as the cause. Under Antoninus Pius, it is true, this would not place the appointed heir in danger; yet, as the minister was also affronted, it might appear advisable to make the testament safe by a pardon: and even under the best Roman Emperor, Marcus Antoninus alone excepted, it might be prejudicial to be the favoured friend of a subject who had proclaimed his aversion to the person of his sovereign.

Several letters which the editor has added here, must be taken away, and transferred to the place which, according to the statement of M. Mai himself, is indicated for several of them by the superscription on the leaves of the MS. This is the case even with the first letter of the second work, which consists of—

II. Letters to the Cæsar Marcus. These may be arranged with sufficient certainty, and breaks in them filled up by not a few letters which the editor has separated from them; so that the first book includes the correspondence before Fronto's consulate (in the summer months of the year 143), and the second, that, during this period, and probably until the end of the year. Many even of this period are very likely lost; out of the correspondence between the master and pupil, during the rest of the eighteen years which Marcus passed as Cæsar in the house of his adopted father, and that carried on during his reign as Emperor, but few letters are

to be found, and almost all of those are placed in smaller collections in the ancient MS. itself.

The grammarian Charisius quotes the fifth book of the correspondence with Marcus; and it may be presumed that the number of books was much larger still, since, however the admiration of the youth for his preceptor may have disappeared in the matured man, his constancy at least must have been unbroken, and is indeed displayed in scattered letters, belonging probably to the latter years of Fronto's life.

The youthful admiration of this most amiable young man is expressed enthusiastically in several epistles. Those written by Marcus from Naples, while Fronto was detained in Rome for two months by consular ceremonies, breathe a longing affection which would be inconceivable, were not youth the season of illusions. There is much in these writings to confirm the honourable judgment which Marcus expresses of his old preceptor, in the first book of his *Meditations*, and which refers alone to his moral character. "Fronto," says Marcus, "made me acquainted with the envy, the falseness, the hypocrisy of tyrants, and from him I learnt that the so-called high-born are for the most part heartless." This sentiment of the old rhetorician is allied to the remark here repeated in two places, that the Romans were unloving, and that the word *φιλοστοργία* was wanting in their language, because they wanted the feeling.

In his *Meditations*, Marcus mentions for what branches of knowledge he is indebted to each of his other tutors, but he is silent as to Fronto's literary instructions, while in his youth, he thought he possessed everything in this master, and, in his desire to give utterance to his gratitude, once declared it to be happiness enough for a life-time to have had such an instructor. In the evening of his days, on the contrary, he reckons it as one of the so-called providential dispensations of his life, which he reviews with thankfulness, that he learnt from Rusticus to write with simplicity. And it is one of our interesting acquisitions from the writings before us, that we know with certainty that this revolution in the taste and sentiments of Marcus Antoninus did not take place till after his

twenty-second year, for, during Fronto's consulate, the youth still treads with undeviating steps the path of rhetorical study.

This revolution must have been terribly painful to the old preceptor, whose whole greatness, in the eyes of the youth he so sincerely loved, rested on his rhetoric; and to this period belong fragments, which the editor has combined with others of very different nature, under the title—

III. "*De Oratationibus*," and represents as belonging to two books thus entitled. No one who has a feeling heart will be able to read the vexation and grief of the old man without pain; the more unpleasant, as no one can wish that Marcus should give way to him, and return to his empty piling up of words.

In other fragments, belonging probably to a transition period, when Marcus was no longer satisfied with the emptiness of that rhetoric, but had not yet quite turned his back on polite literature, Fronto warns him against and abuses the influence of Seneca's style.

Other fragments are of a later date; Marcus is already Emperor, and, probably to give pleasure to the old man, he sends him speeches for criticism which have been read before the Senate, and the old tutor, roused and eager, makes use of the privileges of his former position with no slight feeling of importance.

IV. A very confidential correspondence, which exhibits Marcus Antoninus in all his piety and amiability, though its contents are of little significance, is to be found in the two small collections, "*De Feriis Alsiansibus*," and—

V. "*De Nepote Amisso*." The first is a speaking proof of the kind efforts of the now reigning Emperor to keep up the feeling of lasting friendship for the sake of his old friend, and to find some subject of correspondence, of which there might be a deficiency. Fronto embraces the subject with no less zeal, and spins it out as long as the thread will hold together. In the answer to Marcus's letter of true condolence for the death of his little grandchild, Fronto seems almost to exaggerate his duty, as a rhetorician, of being pathetic and melancholy. It is certainly hard to believe that he

really regarded the death of a child, but three years old, that he had never seen, as a greater loss than that of his own children who had died before ; and that it had so sickened him of life, that he would now like to quit the world. This epistle also shows that Fronto, like almost all his contemporaries, laboured under the same utter confusion of mind on matters of faith, which had prevailed since the decline of the old religion, and which was only in a few noble souls like Marcus, surmounted by philosophy.

VI. Of a still earlier date, is a strange letter of consolation to Marcus, on the defeat of the Romans at Elegia in Armenia, under Severianus, which was the commencement of the great Parthian war—nearly the most foolish thing in the whole collection, and showing clearly, how dead to all interest in politics were the educated classes of that time.

VII. The letters of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus are sacred to us as relics, though their contents are unimportant, at first from the youth of the writer, and afterwards from the weakness of him to whom they are addressed. Those of Fronto to L. Verus are as insignificant as those to Marcus ; and the letters written by this empty voluptuary, who was not without literary pretensions, are perfectly worthless, and confirm the verdict of Julius Capitolinus or Spartianus, that “it could not be said that Verus was a better prose writer than poet, but that he was a still worse poet than prose writer.” History informs us, that Verus gained his Parthian triumph only through the generalship of the military leaders, over whom he nominally held the supreme command, but these letters testify how boldly he appropriated the laurels to himself. Hence, he wished to find an historian of his deeds, and knew of none—or Latin literature was really poverty-stricken to such a degree that none could be found—more capable than Fronto. He took much pains, and not in vain, to stir up the gouty old man to this work, and promised him journals, instructions, despatches, even maps—for this must be the meaning of *picturae* in this place, and even the maps of the seventeenth century strongly resemble pictures. This was the occasion of a work, of

which fragments have been found in the Milan MS., under the singular title of—

VIII. "*Principia Historiæ*," which, no doubt, means "Introduction to the History of the Parthian War." It is a comparison between Trajan and L. Verus, as Roman generals opposed to the Parthians—as may be imagined, entirely to the advantage of the latter, and of no historical value whatever. Whether it was his own death or that of Verus, which freed Fronto from the burden of describing the events of the war itself, is a matter of doubt; but probably it was the former.

IX. A sort of translation from Herodotus, containing the story of Arion, is not worth mention.

X. The remnants of two books of epistles to friends contain little beyond letters of introduction.

XI. The fragments and pretended speeches *De Testamentis transmarinis* are nothing but a letter, addressed probably to Marcus Antoninus, who held the *proconsulare imperium*, on a case in which the transmission of a testament from Asia to Rome was desired. The fragment *De Hereditate Matidiæ* is a report sent in to the latter; and that *Pro Volumnio Sereno* a letter to Arrius Antoninus, *juridicus* in North Italy. This last is perhaps the most important piece in the whole collection, in so far as it shows that the Decurionate, afterwards so dangerous and odious, was then still very much sought. . . .

It is, therefore, our best acquisition from this discovery, that Marcus Antoninus is placed before our eyes in letters which flowed from his heart, and are written in his native language. He who, in his "Meditations," and in his whole life, even as told by miserable authors, appears as a saint, is exhibited here in all the most attractive qualities of youth and riper manhood.

Probably no character among all those within the scope of history is so noble, so spotless as his. But with redoubled sorrow we must confess that he was only a noble-hearted man, not a sovereign who conferred blessings on his people. For not alone did the Empire plunge at his

death into an abyss of misery, from which he had done nothing to save it, but, under the influence of deceit and blindness, or of weakness, he bequeathed his power to unworthy successors, who, rendered bold by impunity, imposed a heavy yoke upon the people;—nay, even his own reign was a period of many calamities.

If, therefore, the comparison so often instituted between the great king whose birth we celebrate to-day,\* and Marcus Antoninus, be unsuitable in many points, yet the latest generations—and we trust confidently that the greatness of Prussia will endure to the latest generations—of Germany will recognise that her greatness was thus firmly based by Frederick, and that he is the benefactor of his people for all time, while Marcus Antoninus was not even able to secure happiness and dignity to his contemporaries.

\* This Essay was read before the Academy on the birthday of Frederick the Great.

PETRONIUS AND HIS AGE.\*

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. . . . . The remark that there are epochs when poets in great numbers exercise their creative powers, and others when they seem to have died out, is no less incontestable than ancient, and our children at all events will painfully recognise its truth. The cause is not to be sought alone in the difference of mental gifts, which Heaven bestows on the human race with unequal liberality, but chiefly in the circumstances of the times,—in the ideas and objects which occupy all minds from childhood, and to a very considerable extent, in the condition of the language. The same mental endowments which burst into blossom under the favouring destiny of a golden age, in another period, run wild, or turn in an opposite direction, or die out;—there are times, when only extraordinary genius can scatter the clouds and mist.

The third century was such a time. If a poet was then born in Rome, he would scarcely pour out the emotions of his heart in song; it would sound universally childish and silly to the world; nor could he relate legends of the heroic ages, for, to him and his century, the heroes had no existence but what learned study conferred on them. The worlds of the gods,—the heroes, the beasts, were dumb; the present world of real life,—a life full of vulgarity and meanness,—alone maintained its existence; and the poet found himself confined to the narration of stories, or novels; just as the modern comedy of Athens took its rise in similar

\* From an "Essay on Two classical Latin Authors, of the third Century after Christ," written in 1821. See the first Volume of the *Kleine Schriften*, p. 348.



circumstances. The age of Boccacio at Florence precisely resembled that of Petronius.

In such a state of things, Petronius surrendered himself to his calling for poetry,—a call which perhaps no one ever felt more distinctly. Now a novel can undoubtedly become perfectly epic, as Plato demands of the poet who relates tales of the heroes ; but, if it rather takes a dramatic turn, there is very little merit in inventing a happy idea, or attractive situation, so long as it is still the author's own voice which we hear. As a being whom we have called into life by magic arts, as soon as it has received existence, acts independently of the master's impulse, so the poet creates his persons, and then watches and relates what they do and say. Such creation is poetry in the literal sense of the term, and its possibility is an unfathomable enigma ; the gushing fulness of speech belongs to the poet, and it flows from the lips of each of his magic beings in the thoughts and words peculiar to its nature. Poets, it is said, are possessed ; in their works, the spirits of the types of their creations speak through them.

All great dramatists are furnished with this power ; when Goethe had created Faust and Margaret, Mephistopheles and Wagner, they lived and moved without the guidance of his will ; but, in the peculiar power which Petronius exercises, in its application to every scene,—every individual of the most actual present,—to all that he touches whether noble or mean, I know of but one writer who is fully equal to the Roman, and that is Diderot. With Petronius, Trimalchio or Agamemnon,—with Diderot, the nephew Rameau or the parson Papin would have spoken for ever, on every occasion and in every position from the promptings of their essential natures ; and it would be equally the case with the purest and noblest souls, whose race was by no means extinct in their days.

Diderot, and a contemporary of his, allied to him in cast of mind, Count Gaspar Gozzi, share the blemishes of the cynicism which defaces the Roman ; their age like his had grown shameless. But as both these men were in themselves

very honourable, and extremely honest and benevolent men, as Diderot's writings breathe a spirit of virtue and depth of feeling wholly foreign to his contemporaries, it seems that the peculiar gift of such a genius can only be bestowed on an elevated and noble being. Deep scorn of the reigning wickedness, which in itself leads to cynicism, and a heart that beats for such greatness and heroism as was nowhere to be found in the actual world, are clearly to be perceived in the Roman.

The age of Louis XIV., in all nations not of Teutonic origin, and the third century in Rome bear a most remarkable likeness in their moral atrocities and disgraceful degeneracy: in both cases, an order of things, which had rotted into utter corruption, was approaching its end. If Diderot were living now, if Petronius had but lived in the third century, it would have been revolting to them to paint obscenity, and the incitement to do so would have been far slighter.

## ON XENOPHON'S HELLENICS AND THE CHARACTER OF PLATO.\*

—♦—

IN the so-called life of Thucydides which is ascribed to a certain Marcellinus, it is said (page 23, ed. Bip.) that he left the history of the war unfinished: τὰ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων ἐξ ἐτῶν πράγματα ἀναπληροῖ δ, τε Θεόπομπος καὶ δ Ξενοφῶν, οἷς συνάπτει τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἱστορίαν. My attention was first drawn to this passage by the essay of Professor Grauert. It is there pronounced corrupt; to me, on the contrary, the passage, as it stands, presented a confirmation of an opinion which I had long entertained on mere internal evidence. This view, which I communicated to Professor Grauert on the publication of his essay, and which led him to modify his opinion, I will now bring forward.

I consider Xenophon's Greek history as consisting of two entirely distinct works, written at very different periods: the completion of Thucydides, and the Hellenics.

It cannot have escaped any reader, that the two first books, and the five following ones, are not connected by a continuous chronological succession; the new idea (if it be a new one), which I submit to the consideration of other philologists, is that this apparent want of connection arises from the circumstance that, contrary to the author's intention, two different works have been combined under the title of the one work.

Such widely different views prevail with regard to composition and style, that the peculiarity I have noticed

\* The first part of this Essay was written in 1826, the second in 1828. See First Volume of the *Kleine Schriften*, p. 464.

would not by itself decide the question. A plan, by which the work thus falls into two fragments, between which only an outward connection subsists, is indeed clearly an ill-contrived one; still the author might not have recognised its defectiveness, might have regarded it as a graceful freedom from constraint. The following argument is that which decides the point. The five last books, which form a complete work, were written after the beginning of the 106th Olympiad, as is shown by the story of the tyrants of Phæræ. But now, at the end of the second book, the author says, that the Athenians, under the leadership of Thrasybulus, marched against the Oligarchs, who dwelt at Eleusis, and had formed a State of their own there, because the latter enlisted troops; but that, after their leaders were slain, the two parties adjusted their differences and cemented their reconciliation by oaths; "*and form one corporate body to this day, and the Demos is true to its oath;*" *ἔτι καὶ νῦν δημοῦ πολιτεύονται, καὶ τοῖς ὄρκοις ἐμμένει ὁ δῆμος.*

Xenophon could not have written thus, some forty-four years after the event. Another generation had long since stepped into the place of those who had sinned, and those who had pardoned; the grey-headed men who, like Xenophon himself and Plato, remembered Lysander's victory in their youth and witnessed the rise of Philip's Empire, cannot be taken into the account here. Every year, as it departed, lessened the merit of the fidelity of the Demos in return for its amnesty; even twelve or fifteen years after the keen thirst for vengeance had been restrained, it would have no longer been a subject for remark, because so many friendships must have been formed and reconciliations have taken place between individuals in the mean time.

This remark has no claim to scholarship: it is one which every intelligent reader of a good translation is as well able to make as a philologist; and hence its correctness may be the more easily ascertained.

If we bear it in mind, the different cast of sentiment, which prevails in the two parts of the work, will stand out with increased distinctness before our eye. In the two first

books, we find a just appreciation of Athens, of the oligarchical tyranny, of the courage and wisdom with which Thrasybulus and the emigrants restored the legitimate constitution, of the admirable moderation and conscientiousness with which the Demos made use of its victory. The speech of Thrasybulus to the *soi-disant* aristocrats says all that the most hearty friend of the Athenian nation can desire, and evidently as the conviction of the writer. In the five last, on the contrary, we meet at every turn the mean insinuations of the renegade, who is growing grey in his revolting idolatry of the Spartan mummy-system, and is only not hostile to his mother-city, when she sacrifices herself to Sparta, with a generosity which it never even occurs to him to recognise. Truly no state has ever cast out a more degenerate son than this Xenophon! Plato, too, was no good citizen, he was not worthy of Athens, he took some incomprehensible steps, he stands like a sinner beside those saints, Thucydides and Demosthenes, but yet how utterly unlike this old fool! How disgusting is the latter with his *σώμματα*, and the lisping *naïveté* of a little girl!

We have no hesitation in deciding, that he wrote the two first books in the interval between the return of the Ten Thousand and the recall of Agesilaus from Asia. For I would wager anything upon it, that, as soon as Athens had emancipated herself again, he would no longer have written in the same spirit: and the story that the decree of banishment was pronounced against him while he was with Agesilaus, seems to be one of the more trustworthy statements which have been preserved respecting him; only we must not suppose that it was, as Diogenes Laertius says, while they were in Asia, but after he had accompanied the Spartan King on his expedition against the allies of the Athenians, therefore against Athens herself. (Compare Anab. v. 3, 6, 7.)

Another tradition, which likewise appears to me very deserving of regard, is, that Xenophon edited the works of Thucydides. If he did, it was the best action of his life. There is the highest probability that he took up

his abode at Athens for a time, before the naval engagement at Cnidus, and was living under the eyes of his fellow-citizens when he published the two first supplementary books; and that he at once added them as such to those of Thucydides. The Aldine edition, following the *Bibliotheca Græca*, entitles all the seven, "*Paralipomena Thucydidis*"—no doubt, however, after a MS.; the title is a fitting one for the two first books, and assuredly the original one, but incorrect when applied to the rest. I believe that they were still regarded as separate works when Marcellinus knew them, and it is those οἱς *Ξ. συνάπτει τὰ Ἑλληνικά*. For, again, for the five last books the latter is the most suitable title.

The ancients laid so much stress upon harmony of numerical proportions in distribution—as they did upon symmetry of every kind—that the conjecture may be ventured that the *Paralipomena* constituted only one book; thus with them the whole history of the Peloponnesian war would have been contained in nine books, like that of Herodotus. They would not have formed a larger volume than one book of Thucydides. But ten is also a suitable number, especially for Athens, whereas seven is quite an accidental and unprecedented number. The five of the *Hellenics* would be the half of it, and, united with the seven books of the *Anabasis*, make twelve.

The *Hellenics* gain much in beauty of form, when separated from the *Paralipomena*. They assume an epic character, and everything groups itself around Agesilaus. The campaigns of Thimbron and Dercyllidas, nay, even the Elean war that leads to the story of the death of Agis and the elevation of Agesilaus to the throne, form only the proem. If the author had intended to write a connected history of Greece, forming a continuation to that of Thucydides, the plan of the third book would have been as faulty as its spirit.

One of the evident differences between the *Paralipomena* and the *Hellenics* is, that in the former a synchronistic reference to Syracuse is kept up, according to the plan of Thucydides, which is not the case in the latter, although important reasons for doing so are not wanting.

I profit by this opportunity to express my opinions on two other points.

If the books of Thucydides were published so soon after his death, and with a continuation, this is an external evidence against the idea adopted even by the ancients, that the eighth book was not written by him: for it cannot possibly be ascribed to Xenophon. Whether, however, the finishing touches are wanting to it, depends upon the manner in which Thucydides wrote; it would be singular that the first seven books should have received the highest possible elaboration, and that this should not have done so, and, further, that the conclusion of the whole war should have been absent, the sketch of which must nevertheless have been made. I think we may recognise the great author's perfect sense of propriety, precisely in the circumstance, that as the solemnity and dignity of his style rise higher and higher up to the catastrophe in Sicily, so the narrative subsides into a lower tone after the greatness of the history has departed. A bad writer would have imagined that he ought to keep up the same pathos throughout. Thucydides would have returned to his elevated tone in relating the period towards the end of the war and during the tyranny: it was fitting to speak softly, while he told the story of the slow torture of the indecisive struggle.

Any one who assumes that a Syracusan, Themistogenes, has really written the history of the Anabasis, but not the one which bears the name of Xenophon, must also assume that the latter wrote his work later than the Hellenics, therefore at a very advanced age. But the Anabasis is not only far from betraying the token of having been written in old age, it is much more youthful in its character than the Hellenics.

Does the name Themistogenes conceal an allusion to Dionysius, the son of the prince?

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An article for the Rhenish Museum accidentally gave rise to the above essay; and just as accidentally, without any idea of controversy, I gave utterance in it to an opinion which I had often expressed in conversation,—that Plato was not a good citizen and that Xenophon was a thoroughly bad one. Besides, I thought that some one ought at last to declare openly, that the reputation of the latter, as a man of elevated mind and a great author, is entirely undeserved and absurd, and simply rests upon a traditional and superstitious prejudice. What impelled me to do so at this moment was, that I had occasion to speak of his history as a continuation of that of Thucydides.

No literary idol was ever overthrown without its insulted worshippers raising a cry of indignation, and it could hardly be otherwise in the present instance; but I wrote in such perfect good humour that the thought of this never once crossed my mind,—else I do not know whether my dislike of literary hostilities, or my aversion to the renegade Athenian, coupled with the conviction that it was time for some one to step forth for the truth, would have won the day. Still I could never have dreamt that my expression with reference to Plato (which only says what must be known to every one who is familiar with history—which not in the remotest degree derogates from the veneration due to his genius) could have given occasion to a direct attack upon me.

I have as little leisure as inclination to reply to this at length. Controversy is the element of the scholar who has undertaken to chastise and put me to shame; but it is repugnant to me as disturbing the direct course of my own investigations, and I could not reply to reasonings such as those with which it has pleased my opponent to combat me—to charges that impute to me a wanton disparagement of a venerable character—that announce, with no small amusement, that I have (of course not unknowingly) canonised a man, guilty of infamous venality, as a saint,—without giving vent to an indignation which I will keep within bounds. But this renders it all the more necessary to place the matter in its true point of view, and this is all that I shall do.



The essay is opened with a chain of reasoning intended to prove how necessary it is to annihilate my heresy. If Plato was a bad citizen, he was not an upright man; but as his philosophy is the most profound inquiry into truth, it would then follow that the spirit of lies could be a teacher of wisdom and virtue. Plato's civil virtue, therefore, would be much in the same case with that main pillar of philosophy with which the messenger Asmus was like to have come into such an evil plight; against which the learned doctors could not, with all their weight, lean hard enough to prevent its upsetting.

Now I am bold enough not to shun the confession that although I could not exactly conceive of Satan as an inspired preacher of a wisdom in which elevation and profundity were combined, yet I could very well conceive of a man, possessed with the devil, as such, though the evil spirit might often come over him and pervade his whole nature. And, in spite of the use which may be made of it by intolerance, I do not put this forward as a mere hypothesis, but name Rousseau and Mirabeau: and may I not also point to Hippel as he is described to us, and all demoniacal devotees? and to a worse specimen of the same thing in the wise Chancellor, Bacon? But the question at issue is not one respecting men in whom the two spirits are contending, and alternately prevail. For, in the first place, I have not even called Plato a bad citizen; to pervert my words in this way is a controversial trick. I called him "not a good" one, because the spirit of faction and deeply-rooted personal predilections made him inimical to the hereditary and legitimate constitution, and inclined to a party the hypocrisy of whose delusive representations was demonstrated when they came into power,—representations which had no longer a basis in realities, and rendered them as absolutely useless to their country, as the Jacobites were, after the middle of the eighteenth century. All party spirit, political and religious, produces this incapacity to receive natural impressions from facts, but above all when the spirit is one of repression and negation. Would to God it were otherwise! But since it

is so ; since noble, nay, saint-like men, when divisions have prevailed, have become the slaves of party spirit and done unpardonable, nay, horrible things, it has a two-fold importance that we should be familiar with the fact : in the first place, that we may be the more watchful to preserve our own freedom against this spirit, and secondly, that we may neither join with those who condemn otherwise noble-minded men on account of such sins, nor yet be seduced into approving the misdeeds which they committed or concurred in, for the sake of their personal virtue. Bishop Belsunce acted as a saint during the plague of Marseilles, no doubt from the bottom of his heart ; and a few years afterwards, he persecuted worthy Jansenist priests like an inquisitor. How did Bossuet behave towards the Protestants ? and yet how wisely did he act towards the Court ? Now, these cases of men, actuated by opposite demons, stand out with such peculiar prominence, in times of violent commotion—such as that of the Revolution, and the convulsions to which it has given rise—that they cannot have escaped any observer, and this period my opponent has witnessed as well as myself.

It is one thing to be a traitor to the fatherland, like Hyperbolus, Æschines, Demades,—and another thing to be “not a good citizen,” who, out of dislike to the existing forms, and to the persons in power, withholds his love and homage from his country, and, if he does not shut himself up in selfishness, transfers them to foreigners. Many have had the misfortune to be born amidst such circumstances that this cannot even be charged upon them as a sin ; and as far as our imperfect account of Athens reaches, Plato does not merit much blame for acting thus.

I call Plato “not a good citizen,” because he never expresses the very slightest appreciation or love of Athens ; but, on the contrary, the scorn and contempt which he pours on democracy, derive their bitterness and point from the circumstance that he was thinking of his mother-city when he wrote them ;—because, while possessing every

gift that would have made him useful to her and fitted him to guide her into the right course, he proudly held himself aloof;—because, nothing but the blindness of party-spirit can account for the slighting manner in which he speaks of the noble patriot Lysias, and his endeavours to exalt Isocrates at his expence, although the latter was decidedly—at all events in his old age—a thoroughly bad citizen, as well as an unspeakable fool, whose conduct is not atoned for, by the despair which seized him, when he suddenly beheld the abyss open before him. In revolutionary times, distinguished men often get entangled in their youth in proceedings for which it would be cruel to make them responsible afterwards; but it is none the less true that their errors almost always leave a scar behind. I ask those who really know the history of Greece, whether it can be doubtful to them, under whose colours Plato stood, when the old civil polity and freedom, under Thrasylbulus and the men of the Piræus, were contending with usurpation and servitude, under Critias and those in the city? It is beyond all question that the relative of Critias will have espoused his side, which likewise explains Plato's enmity to Lysias, who staked property and life upon the fall of the tyrants. Miserably scanty as are the notices of Plato which have come down to us through Diogenes, they are of such a kind that if, by a miracle exceeding anything we can conceive, Plato had been in the Piræus, Thrasyllus, Hermippus and their fellows would not have neglected to mention precisely such a circumstance. That he removed to Megara they have informed us; and no one has ever questioned the correctness of this notice; as indeed there is no ground to do, even if his travels in Egypt should be as apocryphal as his course of initiation in the temples undoubtedly is. This removal to Megara, where the Athenians must submit to live as *μετοικοί* under a patron, and pay a tax upon the right of domiciliation, was quite a different thing from the removal of a German from one city to another; no one could resolve to take such a step, except upon very urgent grounds, such as certainly existed for the

friends of the Thirty Tyrants, even if innocent of any participation in their misdeeds.

The more earnest and passionate is the soul, the more decisive are the impressions of early youth,—the influence of the first men to whom the boy looks up, happy in their familiar love,—the influence of relationship. It is no arbitrary hypothesis, that Plato, from his boyhood, stood in this near relationship to Critias, the uncle of his mother. Such a highly gifted man, possessing the faculty of fascinating and dominating over men's minds so as to govern his high-spirited colleagues, must have exercised it irresistibly upon his grand-nephew. Before he was banished, he appeared to have the right on his side, as is the case with every opposition to a government rich in abuses; when he fell into misfortune, Plato was still very young, and did not see him again till he returned as a tyrant. And here I expressly guard against the misconstruction of supposing that I accuse Plato of having been an accomplice of the Thirty Tyrants. I would stake my life upon it that he was not; but even if a noble youthful soul regarded their acts with horror, yet in such circumstances the thought may be clung to, that a dreadful necessity rules, and thus the earlier love for the revered man continue to exist. It is more than comprehensible, that Plato should lament over him, and never forgive those who shed his blood. Soon after, one of the leaders of the counter-revolution and restoration of the legitimate government appeared among the accusers of Socrates; a remarkable example how little the line of demarcation between political parties coincides with that of morality, and that among the standard-bearers of the laws and the most righteous cause, villains are not wanting. Thus it was his youthful feeling and his youthful love which rendered Plato disaffected towards his native city in her legal condition:—still it is none the less true that he was on this account “no good citizen.”

Of the Athenian constitution, evil without end may be said with truth; still the trite and trivial declamations would in great part be put to silence, if any one with the requisite

learning were to profit by the extraordinary completeness of our information with regard to the condition of Athens, to demonstrate how the vital principle instinctively struck out forms and regulations by which the republic kept within the limits of the constitution, and was governed on its principles, in spite of all anarchy. The Athenian people has been more often misunderstood and unjustly condemned than any other nation in history; the old accusations of errors and crimes are continually repeated with a very few exceptions. I would say, God preserve us from such a constitution as that of Athens! if the age of such states were not past for ever, so that we are very secure from it. Such as it was, it shows an unexampled nobleness in the nation, that the excitement of a stormy popular assembly, and the opportunity of giving any single disgraceful vote unperceived, should have produced so few bad decrees; and that, on the contrary, magnanimous, heroic, self-sacrificing resolutions were adopted by thousands, among whom the so-called lower orders predominated, such as are only adopted in a blessed hour by the individual who has to maintain his own honour and that of illustrious ancestors. As to those who declaim against the Athenians as a worthless, frivolous people, and talk of their republic as ruined beyond hope in Plato's time, I will not reckon them as responsible for their injustice, for they know not what they do. This is an example of the way in which insufficient knowledge leads to injustice and calumny. Why does not every one ask himself whether he is really in a position to form a judgment on the facts lying before him? Here too the dæmon of Socrates will not forsake the upright man. Let others raise an outcry against me, or scorn me as they will: I pray God to give me, if days of trial should be allotted to my old age, and to give my children, who will certainly see evil days, as much self-control, mastery over the desires, courage in danger, calm fortitude in the consciousness of a noble resolution whose issue was unfortunate, as the Athenian people displayed, taken as one man (of the morality of individuals we are not speaking here); and the man who

possesses such a character, and sins no more in proportion than the Athenians, may look forward to his last hour in peace.

The Rhetoricians were in antiquity a class of empty praters, their teachings a school of lying and detraction; many a stain has been affixed to nations and men through them. Thus it has been echoed from one declamation to another, among the instances of the ingratitude of Athens, that Paches was forced to free himself with the dagger from the sentence pronounced against him by the popular tribunal. What a satisfaction to me it was to find, last year, in a passage in which nobody will look for it, that the tribunal condemned him, because he had dishonoured noble women in the conquered city! The Athenians did not allow him to come off with impunity, because he had taken Mitylene and averted a frightful danger.

The fathers and brothers of the thousand citizens who fell as freemen at Chæroneæ,—who joyfully declared in the monumental inscription, that they did not repent their resolution: that the issue was decided by the gods, the resolution was the glory of men,—who conferred a golden crown upon the orator by whose counsel arms had been attempted with such ill success, and their beloved ones had fallen, without enquiring whether it would excite the anger of the victor: the people who refused to deliver up the patriots—though summoned to do so by Alexander from the ruins of Thebes,—and chose rather to await him before their walls: who, while the time-serving and timid warned them day by day not to irritate him, condemned citizens to death, who had bought slaves that had come into the power of the Macedonians through the conquest of Greek cities that were hostile to Athens: the people, whose poor men, preponderating in the Assembly, renounced the public distributions by which alone they obtained on a few feast days the luxury of meat, whereas, for the rest of the year round, they lived upon olives, herbs, and onions, with dry bread and salt fish, and made this sacrifice that they might arm for the honour of their country;—this people has my whole heart and my

deepest reverence! And when a great man abandoned this noble and docile people, which it is true did not appear every day in holiday clothes nor was free from sins and weaknesses, he was most justly punished by falling into the error of attempting to wash a blackamoor white;—to convert a worthless profligate like Dionysius, and through him to enthrone philosophy in the midst of the pool of Syracusan licentiousness and voluptuousness; and the scarcely slighter folly of seeing a hero and an ideal in a rash innovator, so deeply infected with the spirit of tyranny as Dion. He who could think success possible in his case, and despair of a people like that of Attica, had made great progress in straining out gnats and swallowing camels.

In the mode in which government was conducted at Athens, if Plato had appeared as a friend and guardian to his nation, he would not even have had to choose between the carrying out of his philosophical speculations and taking a share in the guidance of the nation, as would have been the case to some extent in our time.

There is no example in history, of efforts so blessed as those of Demosthenes; his great success, the resolutions to which he impelled his own and other cities with almost miraculous power, would be the least important part of his work, even if a fortunate issue had reversed the course of the world's history. It was much more (and this was independent of fortune) that he refined and ennobled his people; those of susceptible minds among the elder generation were born again through his preaching, and a younger generation grew up among them, whose ingenuous spirits had been hallowed by him; hence, the Athenians of the 110th Olympiad stood far above those of the 106th.

It is true they fell nevertheless, and denied their teacher and master; they were thrown into consternation by the menaces of Alexander, when he turned back from India towards the West, and they had no ally in the whole world. That wounded Demosthenes more deeply than any misfortune of his life; but, if his reproaches sounded bitter, yet love glowed with undiminished fervour in his heart. When

the moment came in which deliverance was possible, and the leaders of the republic had decided on the right course, but through jealousy and an evil conscience delayed the recall of the great man, beside whom they were insignificant, against whom they had sinned,—he joined himself (a faithful Ekkard) to their ambassadors, unmindful of himself, demanding nothing for himself, to enlist recruits for his fatherland and the cause of his life;—he pardoned without grudge the unfaithful Hyperides, because he was useful to Athens, and gave him courage to regard himself once more as the friend of his exalted master, to forgive himself, and to die with composure.

It is on this account especially that I have called him a saint; I do not envy him who judges differently. His whole life as a citizen, his honour, are without spot or change; and it is really time that we should hear no more of the old story of his being bribed by Harpalus. Providence, which suffered the honour of the noblest of all statesmen to be long overclouded to the credulous, has permitted all the circumstances of the negotiation to be so preserved, that the turpitude of the calumny is as clear to us as if we had been contemporaries.

Mediocrity finds a consolation in making out that great men have not been raised to eminence by their own character and genius, but by outward advantages and instruction. Thus, there were people who imagined that Demosthenes owed his eloquence to the Rhetoric of Aristotle; a piece of folly, whose refutation is one of the unnecessary labours that Dionysius of Halicarnassus has imposed upon himself. Hermippus wrote that he had been a hearer of Plato, but had no authority to quote for it except that he had found it in an anonymous work. On so rotten a foundation rests the statement which universally passes for undoubtedly historical; and, in fact, I should like myself to think of Demosthenes as the hearer of Plato and through him the friend of Aristotle, but that the greatest internal improbability stands in opposition to a testimony which can prove nothing at all. The influence of the great teacher must have left traces in the cast of his expression and thoughts, especially in his earliest



speeches ; but even in them we find nothing of the kind. It is impossible for two great authors of the same city, of whom the younger lived more than thirty years before the death of the elder, to be more completely destitute of the slightest similarity. Thus, this legend rests upon no better grounds than the certainly false statement that Demosthenes was also a pupil of Isocrates.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LECTURES ON ROMAN  
ANTIQUITIES.\*

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THE term antiquities, taken objectively as a branch of learning, denotes the knowledge of the whole political and of the individual life of a nation, in so far as our knowledge of it is confined to the historical memorials that have been preserved ; whether it be that the nation in question has lost its independent existence by external revolutions, or that, while still subsisting, it has changed its forms in the course of ages. It is therefore clear that as many systems (*σύστημα*, a unity, a whole) of antiquities might exist, as nations of whom historical records are extant ; and that if we single out particular nations, as the Romans and Greeks, this partiality is simply owing to their superiority. Many nations indeed still resemble in all their main features their forefathers thousands of years ago ; and this is the case not only with those which, by their scanty capacities for culture, are limited to the most immediate necessities of life, but also with the greatest nations of Asia, noble as well as ignoble, which are bound in inviolable forms by their religion and laws. It is not alone the negro whom the present age finds just as he was thousands of years ago, the lapse of time has effected almost as little change in the Chinese ; and all the nations professing the Mahometan creed will continue to resemble their forefathers so long as their religion subsists. But if we look into the history of these nations, we recognise that its barrenness is incontestably the result of this perma-

\* This Essay was written in 1811 ; and will be found in the second volume of the *Kleine Schriften*, p. 1.

ment uniformity; and, on the other hand, that a nation or its history is interesting just in proportion as its antiquities are rich and various, and exhibit successive grades of improvement developed from spontaneous impulses.

It is equally evident, that the subjects of this study are identical in kind with that knowledge of the state of our own nation, which we acquire—in part insensibly, from the consciousness of our own habits and the relations which surround us,—in part as the result of reflection on the circumstances of our civil life. And as the strength and definiteness of this consciousness determine a man's capacity for action and stability of judgment, so does a true insight into the history of a nation depend upon an extended knowledge and a clear understanding of its antiquities. For the very history in the midst of which we are living, is only understood by us, when, so far as human limitation permits, none of the actions and events of our times fall upon the ear as an unmeaning sound,—only to the extent in which we ourselves have been actors within a certain sphere, and are qualified to fill a larger one. Thus all the help to our comprehension of the present, which we derive from immediate experience and contemplation, would be wanting to the history of past ages, but for antiquities; even if history were not usually written without the endeavour to present a living picture. All history, being a representation of action, can only be understood by thinking an action, just as all science consists in construction and in thinking a creation.

Hence, it needs no further proof that the antiquities of remarkable nations have a well-founded claim to be considered as independent branches of historical science, and not merely as subsidiary philological information, useful for the understanding of the classics. Further, it would be quite superfluous in our day to argue against this view, as on the contrary, an inconsiderate neglect of strictly philological preparatory studies, on the part of those who venture to treat of ancient history, is now much more to be feared than an undervaluing of history on the part of eminent grammarians. Equally false with this, now obsolete,

depreciation of antiquities is the opinion with which smatterers in philology would fain cover their deficiencies, namely, that grammatical study and the interpretation of the ancient authors have no other value than that of furnishing the materials for the study of antiquities, no independent worth, and hence deserve study only for the sake of this secondary utility. The excellence of its illustrious periods is what attracts us to study the essential characteristics and the productions of antiquity, and justifies us against the ignorant; and, it is one thing to recognise that every branch of antiquities is linked together, so that each depends upon or supports another, and a different thing to attempt to subordinate one portion of this whole to another as if it had no intrinsic value, except in the case of a special treatise. We divide the whole history of an ancient nation, into its antiquities, and the succession of its outward events, as, with a man, we distinguish between the events of his life and the idea that we have of his person, his character, and his peculiarities. The events derive their interest in most cases only from our conception of the permanent totality, although in general we cannot acquire the conception of the latter without the study of the former.

According to the definition we have given, it is clear, that if antiquities could be complete, they would furnish us with what statistics give us for our own age, and with something more; namely, such a view of individual life as we gain from books of travels, for foreign countries,—from our every day life and occupations, for our own nation. All such notices go to form, according to the proper sense of the word in Greek usage, an *ιστορία*, or branch of knowledge; and are the means whereby erudition gradually accumulates, as the result of the enriching and self-culture of every healthy mind, even amidst the most inartificial circumstances and without any systematic and premeditated instruction. We find a number of such notices about countries and peoples, as well as the history of their forefathers, among tribes which we regard as entirely savage and which really perhaps possess no kind of science, just as we find among them,

and among perfectly unlettered peasantry, an extensive knowledge of natural facts, a vivid idea of the starry firmament, an acquaintance with plants and animals. This kind of knowledge differs only in extent from the opulence of the historical records of Herodotus, or of the most erudite scholar of modern times; whether it is gained by observation, inquiry, or reading, is accidental and indifferent. Men, so replete with this knowledge, that only prejudice and blind custom could refuse them the epithet of learned, are found in all nations of noble race, though they may neither have writing nor anything which supplies its place. In fact, the great multiplication of books and means of instruction gives rise to the danger that a still-born learning, or, to borrow our simile from another realm of nature, a learning as unprolific as the double flowers of our gardens, may come into vogue. Of no invention is the abuse so easy and so prevalent as of the art of writing. The reader forgets that it is no more than the sign of speech and the substitute for oral communication, and but an imperfect one, so that it requires a sound, acute and well-disciplined mind to enable the imagination to restore for the ear and heart the idea of the song or the animated discourse. He reads with his eyes alone, whereas the most perfect discourse is so, inasmuch as it calls up the image which stood before the mental eye of the orator; his mind remains inactive; names and chronological definitions—the mere aids to the designation of the objects and their results—become positive realities to him, and in the same proportion, he loses his original faculty of seeing all things in fancy,—that faculty which makes the child's first books so enchanting, and their selection so important for his whole after life. On the other hand it becomes equally rare for the author to write as if he were speaking; he has been already spoilt while as yet only a reader, and the more wearily he drags along under the dead weight of the outward signs of which he is seeking to disburden himself, the farther does he remain from the simple natural use of writing as exercised by the masters of antiquity.

Thus, if we reflect upon the disadvantages necessarily resulting from the universal application of this art, it cannot surprise us, that the golden age of the Greek intellect was that in which no book grew under the stylus or the calamus, but these merely served as aids (and probably not until after the lapse of centuries) to the precarious tradition of the nation, and the overladen memory of the poetical singers and narrators. In fact, it is historically demonstrable that the multiplication of books, and their composition in the act of writing, effected a mournful revolution in the intellectual history of the Greek nation, and undermined its grandeur: on this point, the sage, even in Plato's time, could no longer deceive himself, and his prophecy of the dangerous consequences of the art of writing, is a testimony how acutely he felt them himself. Thus, too, it is certain that languages grow poorer and stagnate in books, because particular forms acquire a tyrannical predominance; and the ear, ruled by the eye, accustoms itself to condemn in writing, phrases of pure old origin that long remain in use by millions, and are regarded as irreproachable in conversation, till at last, under the pressure of exclusion, they really degenerate and become vulgar. We must not, however, allow these evil consequences to seduce us into the extravagance of rejecting the art of writing and the books which are its offspring; but, warned by them, watch over education, and the regulation of our own minds, so that we may enjoy the inestimable advantage of conversing with the most exalted minds, who were the contemporaries of our forefathers thousands of years ago, and listen to the enterprising travellers who have visited another hemisphere, as if they spoke to our own ears and eager curiosity. Even in their most degenerate form, learned works, and the materials of such, are instructive to him who knows how to make use of them,—dead to him who has not the living sense. The despiser of learning deserves contempt or pity; it is the first object of an academical institution at once to impart true learning to the hearer, and to enable him to complete for himself the structure thus commenced for him.

The loftiest ideal of a scholar, which, indeed, neither

Aristotle nor Leibnitz nor any human mind, with the most perfect aids, has ever approached or will ever be able to approach even at a remote distance, were that he should possess and govern, as the kingdom of his inner sense, all that can be or ever has been perceived of the universe by our limited senses. Of that Omniscience which the poet sings in his praise of knowledge :—

*δοτ' ἦδη τὰ τ' ἔοντα, τὰ τ' ἐσσόμενα, πρὸ τ' ἔοντα—*

he would possess the present and the past. Such a knowledge were divine, not human ; but we may be allowed to call that approximation to it also divine (if any other human quality may bear this title than those highest characteristics on which it has been conferred by the universal consent of all the nobler races of mankind), circumscribed as are its impassable boundaries, which, to the greatest extent that our limitations permit, comprises the experiences and perceptions of multitudes of our race who have lived thousands of years ago ; at least, when this learning is not an oppressive burden, but the armour and weapons that bring victory and dominion to the mighty arm that wields them. And even though, mostly through our own fault, the portion we have each of us acquired of that wealth is so much smaller than that which we had the means of acquiring, yet we will nevertheless strive to earn the title of a scholar, and wear it with pride, when we have merited it, as a noble crown, the third in rank by which mental pre-eminence can be distinguished. For we must concede a higher rank to the men who have cultivated to perfection those intellectual faculties which more rarely grow up and yield fruit than the universal love of knowledge. Higher are the artist's creative and constructive faculties, and the power of action ; and more sublime is the reflective insight possessed by the original thinker, who is not contented with the simple contemplation of the facts presented to us by history, but penetrates through the seeming reality to the foundation of truth. Yet learning does not occupy an isolated position ; as, indeed, nothing does in the real world ; it is often wedded

to art and the companion of science,—aids her, and is favoured by her in return.

We lay no claim to the title of a science for that portion of history which will be treated of in these lectures, since the strictest usage excludes the employment of it in that signification in which this word is synonymous with knowledge, as *ἐπιστήμη* denotes the sum of an artist's knowledge.

History has two means by which it supplies the deficiencies of its sources, whether their falsification or their poverty: namely, criticism and divination. Both are arts, which may certainly be acquired from masters, and which a man must himself understand before he can judge of their productions, but in which no one can succeed without a special calling and aptitude. Further, because they are arts, they cannot be taught by rules; or rather, those which may be given for their exercise are, after all, only formulas, which can profit none but those who have already practised them from natural talent. Enthusiasm for the history of past ages must be awakened by love: materials must be collected by unwearied industry; then, points of certain truth present themselves to the eye of the historian, and these, when he has sharply defined their boundaries and their relations, shed a ray upon the obscure and half invisible portions which perplex the superficial reader, so that they, too, kindle and give forth fresh light, till by degrees the foreign intrusions can be distinguished, and the extent and at least the outlines of the portions we have lost can be determined. This is the office of criticism and divination, in the application of which, errors of detail are no doubt possible, but which nevertheless, on the whole, afford to him who practises these arts conscientiously, an amount of security which justifies him in refusing to confine his labours to the preservation of what is extant, while leaving out of consideration what is lost; in the confidence that his efforts will be rewarded by results of greater certainty and variety. Through this method alone can the Roman antiquities be elucidated and restored. There has been no want of diligence nor yet of learning and judgment



in the manner in which they have been already treated, especially during the first century that elapsed after the diffusion of the Greek language in modern Europe,—the true era of the restoration of philology. What was then accomplished, by the great Italian philologists of the sixteenth century, is matter of just admiration, especially when we consider that it is the fruit of only one portion of the industry devoted to all branches of philology. This very circumstance, however, was not without its consequences; but it was rather owing to the injurious influences of other causes, that the antiquities of Rome present such a scene of confusion and error as compared with those of Greece—although even the latter offer a harvest of improvements. The statement of these causes will form the justification of a really not ungrateful independence of the honourable labours of our restorers, and of a different and bolder method, which it is all the more necessary to place in its true light, because an extravagant licence, that scorns all criticism, may easily bring even real discoveries in antiquity into bad repute.

No complete work on the Attic constitution, any more than on that of Rome, has been preserved from ancient times; but, on the other hand, the lexicographers have transmitted to us such a copious store of notices, from a masterly description of it, at a time when it had assumed its distinctive characteristics, that their combination is an easy and agreeable task. The work of Festus would be much less satisfactory even if it were complete, because the compiler of the Extracts did not possess the knowledge which we recognise in the Greek compilers, but, as it is, there is probably not above a twelfth part of it preserved in an available condition. The classical authors of Athens belong to the period in which the characteristics of the nation and its constitution were still unobliterated; the writers, in whom we have to seek the image of Rome, do not commence until the period of anarchy and violence, when the nation had degenerated in every way, and lost its distinctive peculiarities. It is a fact which every German

in the middle classes, of mature age, will confirm, that an incredible number of national peculiarities and old usages, which we remember as existing in our childhood, have been swept away by the storms, which agitated the minds of all, even before they affected our outward relations. Rome had been transformed by a similar revolution in the mode of life, when Cicero and Cæsar reached manhood. Still it was this un-Roman Rome which lay nearest to the antiquaries: the period when the power of each magistrate did not depend upon the magnitude of his office, but upon the person of the citizen who held it: when the same dignity was now powerless, now omnipotent: when all the main elements of government had departed from their original purpose and lost their significance: and when even the language had been entirely remodeled by a foreign cultivation. At the end of the seventh century, Rome was a hopeless chaos, and the materials with which writers commenced the representation of it as it was before the imperial times, consisted on the one side of this confused heap of ruins, and on the other of historical accounts of the elder constitution, by authors who themselves, for the most part, were unable to descry in the depths of antiquity the subjects of which they treated. Just as Sulla undertook to restore the old constitution, so should the antiquaries have followed the progress of innovations to their last development, and then traced them back to their germs, in order to render the accounts of ancient times intelligible, and to divine the original record from the confused, inconsistent, and misinterpreted narrations of later date.

This course would seem so natural to the strong and healthy sense of the ancient scholars, that we cannot but look about for a reason why they did not pursue it. Probably they were prevented from doing so by two circumstances: their overweening reverence for all ancient authors, every assertion of whom they regarded as incontestable and decisive, and a delusion as to the completeness of the Roman history.

Their reverence for the authority of the classics rarely

allowed them to entertain the idea, that even a later writer or a foreigner might probably have said something quite erroneous about Roman antiquities,—that a foreigner, or even a native might have entirely misunderstood an authentic ancient document from the changes in the signification of words. It would have been a very surprising thing if Sallust or Tacitus had known more of the Roman jurisprudence, 500 years before their time, than a British statesman of that of his own country, at a proportionately remote period, since it requires a very peculiar cast of mind for a practical statesman to take an interest in the primitive stock, whose nature has almost been lost through a long series of graftings. Nobody would expect anything else, were it not that the long line of antiquity is to our eyes so foreshortened, that no doubt very few practically realise, that the time which elapsed between Plautus and Claudian, was as long as that from the Minnesingers to our own day. For the contemplation of antiquity is like looking up at mountain-ranges rising one behind the other, of which the most remote and central peaks appear quite contiguous to the headlands at their base. Under the influence of this delusion, we shut our eyes to the evidence, which meets the reader of those historians at every turn when they speak of old things and times, that all these were a foreign world to them. It is the same delusion which makes us persist in laying as much weight upon Livy's and Cicero's verdicts respecting ancient times, as if pronounced by eye-witnesses and actors in the scene.

These early restorers and their successors neglected almost as much to distinguish between different ages, as to weigh the value of the testimonies they met with. They did not perceive the changes which had entirely altered the nature of things while allowing them to retain their old names. Thus, what was proved to be true of one age was assumed by them, without the slightest doubt, to hold good of remote centuries, unless some history stated in so many words that a change had taken place; and conflicting statements were to be brought into harmony by the most forced constructions. They seem to have set out with the fixed

assumption that, if great innovations had been introduced, history must record the fact, not reflecting that, with regard to long periods, nothing has been preserved but scanty extracts from the history of wars, because, in those barbarised times, no other kind of history was found interesting. The men who overlooked this have, of course, still less remarked how little interest and attention Livy bestowed on domestic history; and how often his silence is convicted of negligence by other accounts or internal evidence.

The restorers of antiquities were also to some extent in the case of an unscientific man who should undertake to edit ancient works on mathematics or natural philosophy. In our department, likewise, there is much that can only be understood by tact; but tact can be cultivated only by experience, observation, and intercourse with others—and these seem to have been wanting to them. They had familiarised themselves with the language of antiquity, but not with its politics and its civic forms; they could not comprehend the function and the legal powers of the government, the magistracy, and the people, nor indeed any social relations unless they were expressly described in given passages of the classics. Accordingly, many passages necessarily remained barren to them, which pre-suppose what nowhere happens to be mentioned in so many words.

All this censure applies to the treatment of antiquities up to Sulla's time. But the disadvantages that encumbered this study vanished when contemporary authors appeared on the stage, and while we must not neglect to test their investigations—especially those which concern the times of Constantine's successors—we shall gain little more than some supplementary additions to the excellent and voluminous collections of truly great and far-sighted men.

The Roman antiquities are studied and taught as an auxiliary either to philology or to jurisprudence. With the former object, we have as much inducement to take note of the domestic life, technology, agriculture, etc., as of the State, and we restrict the period of antiquities within the same limits as that of the classical literature. From the second

point of view, the relations of the State assume almost exclusive importance, and those are not less interesting in Justinian's time, than in the earliest period of the past. I have objected to the degradation of antiquities into a mere subsidiary study ; but as every department of science has, besides its general value, a special importance on account of its relations, I think I may without inconsistency bear it especially in mind, in my treatment of this subject, that the knowledge of, the political relations, to which the legislation from Constantine to Justinian had immediate reference, cannot be less important and interesting to the jurisconsult, than that of the classical period to the philologist.

The term department of science includes the idea, that the collective antiquities of a nation consist of a series of descriptions answering to the essential changes in its circumstances. It would therefore be inappropriate to treat the whole period of Roman antiquity, whether we fix its termination early or late, as a unity, and divide our lectures according to the separate subjects, so that, for instance, in speaking of the Senate or the Consulate, we should bring forward in order all that appears worthy of mention about them, from the earliest to the latest periods. This method dismembers the totality, and makes a vivid survey of the various epochs impossible. And it cannot avoid at least an approximation to the mode of presenting the subjects according to epochs, as otherwise the monarchy, the dictatorship, and the Empire must be introduced in juxtaposition.

With regard to the constitution and the administration, very distinct main divisions present themselves. But these do not admit of an exact application to the remaining branches of antiquities. The modifications that took place—in the military system, for instance—undoubtedly stand in immediate connection with those in the constitution, but the remodeling of the former occupied much longer periods. If this course of lectures could include the manners and customs, we should scarcely be able to state anything with certainty respecting them before the Punic wars, while we are able to exhibit the civil polity in its whole developement.

It would accordingly be an injudicious procedure, to make sections, giving the picture of the condition of the nation at a certain period, which should include all the topics belonging to antiquities ; almost every leading topic requires its own arrangement. And as every mode of distributing historical matter necessarily involves some inconveniences, we must not overlook those connected with our present method. It is not that the principal topics do not come under their proper sections, for they can be united synchronistically, but it is impossible to avoid repetitions. Still, if this is confessedly a disadvantage, it is perhaps compensated by its allowing us to contemplate the subject from more various points of view, and giving us a deeper insight into it.

I shall, namely, in the first place, delineate the transformations which the republic underwent from its rise to its overthrow, by taking separate epochs, and showing, in each, the relation which the separate functions of the constitution, for instance, bore to the whole political organisation. When, by this means, the whole life of the constitution has been rendered clear, I shall treat of the single topics included under this head, and bring forward the detached particulars, for which no suitable place had presented itself previously, because they could not be referred to a distinct period, or their mention would have disturbed the symmetry of our survey.

## ON THE AMPHICTYONIC LEAGUE.\*

THE opinion has been maintained, that the Amphictyonic League was a political union of independent nations, who, under the influence of a lawgiver, combined voluntarily, and whose representatives formed a diet, which possessed a sovereign legislative authority, not alone over the general international relations of the confederate nations, but also over their civil laws;—a judicial authority over the States among themselves, and between them and their subjects;—finally, the direction of the common wars and affairs of all the united nations.

A confederation, by which the independence of the allied peoples should be limited to so great an extent, indeed in many respects annihilated, is in all ages such an extremely rare phenomenon, that if history appeared to mention it, it would be improbable, and require careful proof; much less are we justified in taking it for granted.

The rare examples, in which States have formed a confederation of this kind, are only to be found where a nation of common origin and united under one sovereignty, has liberated itself from its supreme head, and gradually extended its boundaries by associating other states with itself; but there are no instances of perfectly independent nations voluntarily uniting themselves in such a bond. The Achæans had been, from the time of their kings, *one* people; it was partly their power, partly the necessities of the cities which were finally incorporated with them, that constrained the latter to accede to a confederacy; yet the Achæan diets

\* See the second volume of the *Kleine Schriften*, p. 158.

do not seem to have legislated on civil matters. Meanwhile, this example by no means justifies the assumption that other associations among the Greeks likewise constituted strictly federative States. Least of all, is this conceivable in the case of totally different tribes, among which so great a diversity existed as that, for instance, between the Thessalian mountain tribes and the Ionians. Such an association would have become a real State; but the political philosophers of Greece did not imagine a State of such extent possible, and hence, Aristotle always draws a very marked distinction between a people and a State, *ἔθνος* and *πόλις*. The Arcadians, the Bœotians, the Asiatic Ionians were each of them a people. The bond of their common origin possessed great strength among the Greeks in their fairest age, and sufficed to maintain free brotherly association and mutual assistance. But it was far even from securing succour to single cities against their enemies, still less was it the basis of common undertakings; it founded no central power, still less did it abrogate the independence of every single confederate State; it did not even prevent internal feuds between city and city. No other means of producing unity was known than the founding of a great city—as Megalopolis was founded by the Mænalians and Parrhasians,—as, in the earliest ages, the founding of Athens had formed Attica into a State,—as, in after times, Bios counselled the Ionians to emigrate to Sardinia and found *one* city,—and as Thales had before counselled the erection of one government (*ἐν βουλευτήριον*) at Theos (Herod. i. 170), to which he added (what clearly proves that the inhabiting several cities under a common government was quite incompatible with the ordinary notions of the Greeks), that the cities might continue to subsist, but must only be regarded as districts: *τὰς δὲ ἄλλας πόλεις, δικομένας μηδὲν ἦσσαν, νομίζεσθαι κατὰ περ δήμους*; (for the comma must be placed after *ἦσσαν*).

Though Dionysius of Halicarnassus sees in the Amphictyons, a ruling assembly, the testimony of this most uncritical historian goes for nothing on this point, just as



we are unable to trust his representations of the earlier history of Rome. In Greek history, we never find the Amphictyons in such a character; and fragmentary as is the early history of Greece which has been preserved to us, still it is clear in each single history, that every Greek people was always independent, unless it obeyed a more powerful nation, and that there never existed a *Greek State*, such as there would have been if the Amphictyonic peoples had formed a federative State. Unmolested by barbarian attacks, the Greeks could have had no object in view in forming a federative constitution, except to maintain peace and administer justice among themselves; but the times, from the Trojan to the Persian war, are full of the most violent convulsions, in which each State was upheld by its own power or by the assistance of friendly cities,—never by judicial decrees or the protection of a supreme court.

Thus, likewise, it is quite incompatible with the idea of a political confederation, that tributary nations, like the Phthiots, the Magnetes, and the Perrhæbians, should be members of the assembly.

Meanwhile, although the Amphictyons did not constitute a confederacy, Greece, at least south of the Oeta, was not without unity. This unity, however, did not subsist in a constitutional form, but was voluntary, depending on precedence and consideration, and consolidated by the Hegemony, which the Spartan Heraclidæ inherited from the Achæans, without whose preponderating authority over the whole of Greece, the Trojan war would have been inconceivable. This precedence rested on feeling and usage, not on a constitution, or a power sufficient to constrain its recognition.

Nothing can mark the difference between the political confederacy of the Greeks, and the Amphictyonic League, more forcibly than the circumstance, that Alexander was chosen by the Amphictyons to avenge the Greek deities on the Persians, and, at the same time, was elected by the allied states (οἱ Ἕλληνες πλὴν Λακεδαιμονίων) as the commander of their armies.

But it is unnecessary to add any further indirect proof that the Amphictyons cannot have possessed a power which would have been inconsistent with the individuality of the separate Greek states, for the oath preserved by Æschines clearly defines the extent of their vocation. What is not mentioned in that, formed no part of their office. Let it not be urged that Æschines only cited what immediately belonged to the special occasion of which he was speaking; that, at any rate, the matter in question had nothing to do with the international regulations guaranteed by the Amphictyons, and, consequently, he could not be likely to mention them. It was never the custom of the Attic orators to recite only portions of the oaths which they quoted. Thus, Demosthenes in the "Timocratea," p. 746, ed. R. gives the whole oath of the Ἡλιασταὶ unabridged, although the question affected only a single point. Thus, Andocides, too, gives the oath of the citizens at full length. I remark in passing, that since it was always the custom to swear in every Greek assembly, we have no right to assume that this remarkable oath was only taken by the representatives of the Amphictyons in hoary antiquity, and not by every new assembly. Now this oath does not contain a word about strictly federative relations, but merely refers to the noble humane restraints, imposed on warfare between the allied nations, and to the common protection of the sanctuary. These regulations, in fact, presuppose a war between two nations who could not voluntarily adjust their differences before an arbitrator; and to prohibit such a war would have seemed to the Greeks as great an encroachment upon their natural liberties, as the prohibition of duelling would have seemed to our forefathers. But, just as among the latter, their laws and judges took care that duels should be fought openly and fairly, so the Amphictyons took care that war should not degenerate and be carried on with barbarity. These rules were subsequently violated in after times, but in the Peloponnesian war it was still by general consent held to be a crime (*παράνομον*), to sack Greek cities, such as Melos, or Scione, and to carry off their inhabitants (both

were Amphictyonic cities, the former Doric, the latter Chalcidian, therefore Ionic); on the other hand, when the inhabitants of a city on the coast of Caria, who were of mixed blood (*μεισβάραροι*), were reduced to slavery, Xenophon mentions the incident without blame. But not the barbarians alone, all the Greeks who were not Amphictyons stood outside the pale of the protection afforded by the League. Thus, the Dorians could, without violating their oath, not only subjugate the Achæans of the Peloponnesus, but even ravage their cities, as they did with Helos: nay, it is a question, whether the Messenians, who from their liberal treatment of those they had conquered, seem to have been more probably Achæans than Dorians, were fully authorised to claim the protection of the oath. Thus, the Eleans had a right to destroy Pisa: neither of the two states was a member of the League; but it was a crime against the law, as well as in itself, when the Thebans destroyed Bœotian cities.

There is a striking analogy between the union of the twelve Amphictyonic Greek nations through the oracle at Delphi, and that of the twelve tribes of Israel through the ark at Shiloh, before the people had grown weary of the theocracy, and desired a king. Themis was the first to utter oracles at Delphi, justice and morality preceded the announcement of the future. Just as the Israelites went up to Shiloh to ask of the Lord,—as the elders of the congregation assembled like the Pylagoræ,—as all Israel went out against Benjamin, when an inhuman crime had been perpetrated in that tribe,—as all the tribes felt themselves to be one nation, although they made war upon each other, and did not protect each other against common enemies, so the Amphictyonic Greeks were one nation, but no State. In ancient times, they may have planned and carried out common undertakings, as Judah summons Simeon to go out to battle with him.

Among the Israelites, who had a common origin as well as a common religion and legislation, the bond of unity, which was never wholly dissolved, is explicable; not so among

the Hellenes. There is only one possible explanation of this phenomenon of the union of twelve people so dissimilar; and that is, a lawgiver, who, in the earliest times of whose history only a faint reflection is still visible to us, appeared as a prophet,—as a representative of the Deity, and linked together the peoples, from Pindus and Olympus to the Arcadian mountains, in one religion, of which Delphi became the centre, as being the immediate seat of the Deity;—a bond which might endure when they were no longer united under one head. Was this Deucalion? Did he, with whom the legend of Greek history sets out, descend with his Græcæ from the mountains of Epirus, as the progenitor of the Incas descended from the Andes? Whoever accomplished this work, it was not the fruit of subtle policy; this could never have brought it about, and what common interest could Perrhæbians and Ionians have had; such a union can only be effected by the voice of prophets and oracles. Herodotus affirms distinctly that the Greeks received their religion from the Pelasgians, that is, from Epirus; Aristotle says that Deucalion came from thence.

Was Amphictyon such a priestly king? Is there any analogy between the circumstance, that in the cities which had become free, those were called kings who succeeded to the priestly office of the kings, and that the delegates who represented Amphictyon in the guardianship of religion and humanity, bore his name,—were his caliphs, as if these latter had been called Mohammed, or the Popes Peter,—just as the Patriarch of Alexandria is always actually called Marcus? Were they called Amphictyons instead of representatives of Amphictyon?

But if, in the primitive times, the Amphictyons, in connection with the oracle at Delphi, were the organ of the theocracy, they sank also with the oracle; which had entirely lost its sacred character, at the commencement of all history now extant; and since they, whether from impotence or indifference, had ceased to fulfil their noble vocation of upholding the laws of humanity and moderation (for we only see them acting as the instrument of policy or priestcraft,—

as the shroud of the defunct religion), we are unable to recognise any noble or beneficial results of their influence, and are not justified in ascribing to them any of the glorious incidents of the Greek history, except in so far as the establishment of the oracle in those primitive times, concerning which we can do little more than form conjectures, may have given the impulse to the developement of the nation.

It is surprising, that while people have sought in the Amphictyons, a Greek federative constitution which never existed, they seem to have quite overlooked that which really united Greece for a time, although, it is true, only as the mask of servitude. This was the constitution legally existing under Alexander,—probably established by Philip at the assembly of Corinth,—of which we find a sufficiently intelligible mention in the speech of Demosthenes (or more probably of Hyperides), *περὶ τῶν συνθηκῶν*. In this, all the points were settled which are peculiar to a proper federative constitution, and further, it provided for the existence of a Congress (*οἱ συνεδρεύοντες*), whose duty it should be to watch over the maintenance of the federative constitution. Of course it was a phantom, and the nominal confederates mere subjects of the Macedonian king, although there have no doubt been treatises to prove that, by it, not only the external security and the internal repose, but also the civil freedom and the laws of the Greek States were for the first time guaranteed.

It is evident that the Amphictyonic League existed in the age previous to the Dorian emigration, because the Dorian States of the Peloponnesus had a voice in it as colonies and members, and because, altogether, there is nothing to explain this union in historical times; and since it cannot be explained, it must have had an earlier origin. This extremely ancient origin likewise renders the exclusion of the Ætolians intelligible. The little district of Doris could not possibly be the mother-country of the large body of emigrants, who were numerous enough to conquer the Dorian States of the Peloponnesus. This, at that time,

much more numerous nation, must have had more extensive settlements; and it was either driven from these, or succeeded in them, by the rude Ætolian tribes, who, so late as the age of the Peloponnesian war, were still distinguished by their unintelligible language and barbarous manners (Thucyd. lib. iii.). Thucydides reckons these western regions as a part of Epirus. The Ætolians who, led by Oxylus, went out with the Dorians and founded Elis, may have been real Greeks; of the latter Ætolians, it is very doubtful whether they were so, properly speaking—although they were assuredly a kindred race, like the Epirots: the emigration of Oxylus probably took place before they entered the country.

There is nothing which seems to contradict the extremely ancient origin of the League, excepting the participation of the Thessalians. But these took possession of the lands and the privileges of the Ætolians whom they expelled or subjugated, and the latter had no doubt—like the people by whom they were surrounded—a voice in the Amphictyonic Council, which now fell to the share of the victors.

The League, however, was never limited to Thessaly, if it comprised all the twelve peoples from its commencement, but must have embraced, before the Dorian emigration, the whole of Greece beyond the Isthmus, with the exception of the Ætolians and the Acarnanians, and in the Peloponnesus, as the territory of the Ionians, the region opposite to Delphi, that was afterwards Achaia.

It is needless to enumerate the Dorian and Ionian States which had a share in the League, after the express testimony of Æschines, that this participation was founded upon common descent. It is another question, whether all the cities, small and remote towns for instance, availed themselves of it. This is extremely improbable, just as among ourselves, many country towns have lost their right to send members to the diets, by their voluntary neglect of this privilege.

That the Ionic colonies took part in the Amphictyony

is expressly affirmed by Æschines, and there seems no reason why later colonies should not also have had a share in it, even if we understand by *later* colonies those of the third and fourth remove, as for instance, colonies from Miletus or even from Cyzicus.

The Perrhæbians, Magnes, Phthiots, were not *πενέσται*, *serfs*, but *πεπλοικοι*, *tributaries* of the Thessalians. The conquered descendants of the ancient Æolians, who inhabited the valley of the Peneus were *πενέσται*; it was not till later times, that the three nations above named were reduced to dependance by the Thessalians, and they now became serfs, but retained, like the Italian confederates, their municipal administration, only under Thessalian sovereignty. During the wars which ended in their subjection, the *πενέσται* rose against their masters (Arist. Polit. lib. ii., cap. 9).

The omission of the great primitive people of the Arcadians in all the lists of the confederates, proves that they had no part in the League. Æschines calls Cottyphus a Pharsalian, and, on general historical grounds, we should expect at this epoch to see a Thessalian at the head of the assembly. To defend the reading found in Demosthenes, it is necessary to make some assumption, as that, for instance, the vote of the Lacedæmonians may have been transferred to the Arcadians at that time; this is not only destitute of all historical proof, but it is not even conceivable, because the Spartans had only a part of the Dorian vote,—not, like the Phocians, a collective vote, which could be transferred to another nation.

Isocrates (Ad Philippum, p. m. 171), sets the Peloponnesians in contrast to the Amphictyons, where he says: “The Thessalians, Thebans, and all those who were members of the Amphictyony were ready to obey Philip,—the Ægives, Messenians, Megalopolitans, and many of the rest were ready to join him in attacking Sparta.”

The Asiatic Æolians had no longer any original tribe belonging to the League, or if they were of mixed origin, none probably from which they could satisfactorily trace their descent.

The Æolians, in the wider and stricter sense, included,—1, the inhabitants of Æolis, afterwards the valley of Thessaly, perhaps, also, the Bœotians; 2, the Greeks in Lesbos and in Mysia. The use of the term Æolians, to designate all the Greeks who were neither Dorians nor Ionians, is of very late origin, and quite unknown to Herodotus. But if he were as ancient as he is modern, it would still be inadmissible to assume that, because out of fourteen or fifteen Æolian peoples, ten had clearly each of them a seat in the Amphictyonic Council, therefore those not named, and especially a people which was more important than all the rest, must be included under one of those named; on the contrary, the very mention of such unimportant peoples as the Melians and the Cētans is a pledge that none but the tribes named were included.

The relation of the Hieromnemones and the Pylagoræ will perhaps be most suitably illustrated by a hypothesis founded on the most ancient Greek constitution, namely, by the assumption of an analogy between the Amphictyonic Council and the Senate (the βουλὴ of Greek republics); and between the *Ecclesia* and the popular assembly. As in the Roman senate, only the presiding magistrate had the power of bringing forward subjects for deliberation; so, in the Greek senate, none but the Prytanes or πρόβουλοι had this right, before the triumph of democracy. Herodotus gives the name πρόβουλοι to the Ionian delegates to the Panionium, but the Prytanes were members of the senate, and, if the term *πυλαία* corresponded to the idea of the senate, so the general name *πυλαγοί* answered to the word *βουλευταί*, and, in that case comprehended also the Hieromnemones who corresponded to the Prytanes. Hence it is, that the proscription of Ephialtes can be ascribed to the Pylagoræ.

Since the Synhedræ of the Amphictyons are only named in the two decrees, we can scarcely make out anything satisfactorily respecting the meaning of this appellation of an office. They were different from the Pylagoræ, are



named after them, and therefore cannot have been the Hieromnemones, if we take this word in its narrowest sense. If we now reflect that the *rex sacrificulus* (ἄρχων βασιλεὺς) at Athens selected for himself Σύνεδροι, assessors (Demosth. Adv. Næeram. 72 and following), it will suggest to us in the case of this spiritual assembly, likewise, the idea of councillors having a seat, but without a full vote; and such seem to have been the delegates of the smaller States of the Amphictyony, if they sent members at all. For that Athens, for instance, should have been unable to exercise her right of voting, till it came to her turn after all those countless Ionic States, would be an absurd supposition.

This does not contradict the testimony of Æschines that all took an equal share, great cities as well as small; this was the case in the popular assembly, which represented the κοινὸν τῶν Ἀμφικτυόνων. As, in every republic, the votes were taken by tribes, not by head, so, in the Achæan League, the votes were taken by cities; all the members represented, in the former, their tribe, in the latter, their city. When it was proposed at the Achæan diet, in the year 556, to exchange the Macedonian for the Roman alliance, the collective peoples took part in the contest, and Dymæ and Megalopolis absented themselves when the votes were taken (Liv. lib. xxxii. 22.) In like manner, the votes must have been given by peoples in the general assembly of the Amphictyons, so that every Ionian present, voted as well as every Athenian present. But other Greeks could have had no part in this voting unless they had surreptitiously intruded themselves; they did not belong to the congregation of the Lord, although they, as well as the barbarian, were as free to consult or make presents to the oracle, as were the non-Israelites in similar cases. The priest, whose name stands as an eponymus at the beginning of Amphictyonic decrees, may have been as foreign to the assembly as the priestess at Argos was to the Argive republic. He was no doubt the priest of Apollo.

The Hieromnemony of the Ætolians has certainly been

very correctly explained by St. Croix, and we must understand by this term their usurpation of the guardianship of the temple, of which the Ætolians had possessed themselves when their League was at the zenith of its power,—before the war of the confederates, under Demetrius and Antigonus the Guardian. So long therefore as the true reading of the inscription is not clearly proved, we may prefer without scruple the older reading, *ἱερομνημονούντων*.

## FROM THE ESSAY ON THE HISTORICAL ACQUISITIONS

TO BE DERIVED FROM THE

## ARMENIAN TRANSLATION OF EUSEBIUS.\*

. . . . . CH. III. The incapacity and indecision of the Greek authors, who, during the period when their nation and literature had sunk to the lowest point, treated in universal histories of the primitive empires of Central Asia, particularly of the thoroughly unintellectual Diodorus, has most unjustifiably caused us irretrievable injury. Under the Macedonian dynasties, not a few Asiatics wrote the history of their fatherland in the Greek tongue, as Josephus did that of his nation in a later age; and while we have no right in general to assume that they neglected their native chronicles and historical monuments, which ascended far beyond the time of the Greek myths and traditions, and invented fables in their stead, we have also an irrefragable proof of the trustworthiness of Berossus and the Phœnician historians, in the perfect harmony with the Old Testament, of the only accounts preserved from them, relating to events mentioned likewise in the historical books of the latter. But instead of deriving his materials from such books, Diodorus has built upon Ctesias and other Greeks like him; and as later authors came to the same unhappy decision, particularly Africanus and Eusebius (no doubt mainly on account of the assumed synchronism of Ninus and Abraham), it has come to be a settled point in the Chronologies, that

\* See the first Volume of the *Kleine Schriften*, p. 179.

the Assyrian monarchy lasted 1300 years and more; the contradictory statements scattered through the profane authors are little regarded, and it has been attempted to reconcile their inconsistency with the authentic Hebrew history, by hypotheses.

It is therefore a remarkably interesting fact, that from two of the new chapters [given us by the Armenian translation], the fourth and fifth, of which only a very small portion has been incorporated by Syncellus, and that so confusedly as to be useless, we obtain through Alexander Polyhistor some idea at least of Berosus' account of the history of the Babylonian and Assyrian eras.

For my own part I regard his account, however remote may be the periods on which it dwells, as truly historical, where he ceases to fix the dates according to astronomical periods; and worthy to be considered as the positive and original history of those primitive nations. Those who may judge differently will not, at all events, dispute that it is a valuable thing to be acquainted with the native accounts; and that these deserve more attention than those of the less pains-taking Greeks, among whom Herodotus alone forms an exception. Nay, even their histories of the first ages of the world—in which we find an attempt, common to very different nations of antiquity, to represent the idea of past ages of the world in astronomical periods, each of which is divided among a number of kings,—by no means deserve to be passed over with contempt; their notions on such subjects are a very important relic of the sacred literature of these nations.

Alexander Polyhistor quotes the following from Berosus: After the Flood, Euexius reigned over Babylon four Neri (2400 years); he was succeeded by his son Chomasbelus, who reigned four Neri and five Sosi (2700).<sup>\*</sup> We find the duration of human life comparatively much more shortened

<sup>\*</sup> The Babylonian chronology occurs so seldom that it will not be superfluous to remark, that a Sosus contains sixty years; a Nerus ten Sosi, or 600 years; a Sarus six Neri, or 3600 years; and that the Chaldeans ascribed a duration of 120 Sari, 432,000 years, to the world, before the Flood of Xisuthrus.

after the Deluge, in the Babylonian writers, than even in Genesis ; and if the list of Berosus, who mentions these and all the following kings by name, had been preserved, with the number of years that each reigned, we should probably see them dwindle rapidly to the age of the present race of mankind. For eighty-six kings are reckoned in the first dynasty, to which a duration of 34,080 years \* is ascribed, of which however nearly a sixth part belongs to the two first kings, of whom alone the name and the length of their reigns have been preserved in Eusebius.†

At the end of this period, the Medians conquered Babylon, and eight Median tyrants ruled for 224 years as the second dynasty.

These are followed by the third dynasty of eleven kings, of whom it is not specified whether they were native or foreign. The number of their years is left open in the text, but added in the margin by the emendator,—who has in other places often availed himself of a better MS.—without doubt incorrectly, as 48 years.

The fourth dynasty of forty-nine Chaldean kings lasted 458 years.

\* This calculation is given us by Syncellus, and the correctness of his text is proved by his adding, they made nine Sari, two Neri, eight Sosi. The Armenian translation has 33,091 years—a number which is at once seen to be inadmissible, were it only by the fact that, while relating to a mythical age, it cannot be distributed into cyclical periods. It is evident that here, also, the Byzantine Syncellus availed himself of the much more copious account of Africanus. It is possible that Eusebius may have understood the sum of the cycles as referring to the whole period before the Assyrians, and subtracted from it the collective duration of the four following dynasties, which cannot be securely ascertained on account of the corruptness of the text.

† This period corresponds to that of the patriarchs after the Flood in Genesis, as that from Alorus to Xisuthrus does to the age from Adam to Noah. In another passage in Syncellus, Euexius and Chomasbelus occur with very short reigns (six and seven years), and only five successors ; they occur immediately before the Arabian dynasty (p. 90, and in Scaliger, p. 14). The text of Syncellus is, however, inadmissible,—whether through the errors of the copyist or his own fault we do not know—and instead of ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦτου τοῦ χρόνου τῶν πρὸς δεύτερον μὲν Χαλδαίων βασιλέων Χωμῶσβηλον· πρὸς δὲ Μήδων Ζωρόαστρην καὶ, &c. &c., must be read ; δεύτερον μὲν (namely βεβασιλευκέναι) Χαλδαίων βασιλέα Χωμῶσβηλον, πρὸς δὲ Μήδων, ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦτου τοῦ χρόνου Ζωρόαστρην καὶ, &c. Ἀπὸ τοῦτου instead of μετὰ ταῦτα is very common with Syncellus.

To it succeeded the fifth, of nine Arabian kings, who governed the Empire 245 years.

This extremely important passage has been misunderstood and abbreviated, if not falsified, by Syncellus (p. 78). He likewise reckons, in the first place, eighty-six kings (those of the first mythical dynasty); but instead of regarding them as native, calls them Chaldeans and Medes; namely, the two first, Euexius and Chomasbelus, Chaldeans,—the remaining eighty-four, Medes. After the fall of this dynasty, he says, Berosus no longer reckons by Sari, Neri, and Sosi, but by solar years; and the next series of kings is Chaldean, under Zoroaster and seven successors, who reigned 190 years. But who can doubt that this Zoroaster is no other than the founder of the Magian religion, therefore a Mede; and this dynasty, the second (Median) dynasty of Berosus, with which also the number of the eight kings agrees. Syncellus omits the third and fourth dynasties, and speaks of the Median as immediately followed by the Arabian (the fifth), to which he ascribes 215 years, instead of the 245 of the Armenian translation; and no doubt his reading deserves the preference, as the individual kings, and the years that each reigned are reckoned up in another passage of this book, and the same number of years results as the sum.

After these five dynasties that reigned over Babylon, forty-five Assyrian kings, whose Empire lasted 526 years, are mentioned as the sixth dynasty, and like the Medes and Arabians who preceded them, as conquerors of Chaldea. Alexander, following Berosus, had also specified these by name, and among them spoken of Semiramis. Now, could a doubt have arisen whether he also, in agreement with the universal tradition, mentioned Ninus as the conqueror of Babylon, the mention of the Assyrian queen would, I think, be a sufficient proof how much younger, according to him, the Empire of Nineveh was than that of Babel. So, too, Syncellus states in the tables of the Babylonian history, that forty-one Assyrian kings succeeded to the Arabians, and in fact, places the kings of kings at Nineveh itself from Belus to Conclerus (exc. Scalig. p. 14, B.); unmindful it must be

confessed, how many he has specified by name in the table of this dynasty, and how many centuries he has reckoned for their monarchy. He does not, however, appeal to Polyhistor as his authority, but to Castor, Cephalaëon, Thallus, Polybius, and Diodorus,—references, which the less deserve our confidence, as Diodorus says nothing at all of the kind.

The question now arises, whether the duration of this Assyrian sovereignty over Babylon is to be understood as extending up to the destruction of Nineveh, or up to the restoration of a Babylonian State, which subsisted, sometimes independent of the Assyrian kings, sometimes tributary to them, with very chequered fortunes, until Nabopolassar founded the mighty Babylonian Empire. On this point the excerpts in Eusebius leave us in the greatest uncertainty; and, at the first moment, their silence would lead us to infer, that Alexander had reckoned the duration of the Empire of Ninus up to its destruction under Sardanapalus, particularly as he afterwards mentions Sennacherib and his successors, with the number of years they reigned. But I believe there is a much greater probability for the second opinion.

In the first place, these excerpts have been so carelessly made, that the mere fact of their silence on any point proves scarcely anything. But on the other hand, it deserves our attention where it is said, that Pul reigned *after* those Assyrian kings. And is it conceivable that Berosus should not have begun a native dynasty with Nabonassar, from whose era and with whose accession, as Vossius has shown with great acuteness, his own annals date their commencement? Is it possible that the Babylonian should have passed over the native kings, who reigned at Babel, if not uninterruptedly, yet before the time of Nabopolassar, and merely recounted the Assyrians, who by no means steadily maintained their supremacy?

While, simply on these grounds, the conjecture gains probability, that some dynasty has been omitted through the fault of the Eusebian excerpts, a comparison with the

chronology of Herodotus establishes the fact, that it can be no other than that of Nabonassar and his successors, and that it must have lasted 103 years, up to the first year of Nabopolassar, as it is stated in the canon of Syncellus.\*

For as Berosus reckons 526 years for the duration of the Assyrian dominion over Babylon, so does Herodotus reckon 520 years (i. 95) for the duration of that monarchy until the nations of Upper Asia shook off the yoke of this kingdom, in other respects still powerful (i. 102). The difference here between a round and a more exact number is quite unimportant, while the agreement clearly proves that Herodotus had collected his historical materials respecting those States, at Babylon itself.

I have attempted, in another treatise, to discover the map of the world, on which the separate geographical statements of Herodotus are based; in a similar way he arranged his ideas of history according to a chronological survey, with which he makes his separate statements agree.

He says in a well-known passage (ii. 145), that, from Hercules up to his own times, about 900 years had elapsed. On what does he base this calculation? Not upon the genealogical register of the Spartan kings, for in this, only twenty-one generations were reckoned since Hercules, consequently, according to his own rule, 700 years. But with

\* Niebuhr appears subsequently to have wavered on this point, and sometimes to have adopted that version of Syncellus which places the first year of Nabopolassar in the 123rd year of the Nabonassarian era. See Dr. Schmitz's "Translation of Niebuhr's Lectures on Ancient History," vol. i. p. 28, *note*, or the original; "*Vorlesungen über Alte Geschichte*," vol. i. p. 34, *note*. "The ground here taken is the version of the canon, which places the beginning of Nabopolassar in the 104th year of the era of Nabonassar. If we adopt the version which places it in the 123rd year, the destruction of Nineveh, even if it belong to the first year of Nabopolassar, does not belong to Olymp. 34, but to Olymp. 38. In 1826, Niebuhr seems to have adopted the second version, for he takes the first year of Nabopolassar to be identical with that of the destruction of Nineveh, placing both events in Olymp. 38, 4." And again, in the conclusion of the Lecture to which the above note is given by the editors, he says, "This much is historically certain, that the Assyrian Empire was destroyed by the united Babylonians and Medes; and the year of this event is, probably, the 123rd of the Nabonassarian era; that is, Olymp. 38, 4, or B.C. 625."—*Tr.*



him the families of the Grecian heroes are not the only Heraclidæ; he regards the kings of the Assyrians, and the elder dynasty of the Lydians (i. 7) also as such; for we cannot suppose Belus and Ninus, the father and grandfather of Agron, to be different personages from the Assyrian kings of the same name. Such a genealogical table only indicates that this dynasty in Lydia had come from Assyria.

Now, these Heraclidæ reigned in Lydia 505 years; after them, the Mermnadæ—up to Olymp. 58, 1,—170 years; from this date to the 90th Olympiad, which may stand for about the date which Herodotus assumes as that of the present time in his history,\* are 128 years, and three generations between Hercules and Agron are 100 years; in all 903 years.

A similar sum must be obtained for the Assyrian history by a computation of its periods.

Two generations between Hercules and Ninus	. 66 years.
Dominion of the Assyrians over Upper Asia	. 520 "
Interval of the independence of the Medes without kings—undecided	
Four Median kings (i. 130 +)	. . . . . 150 "
From Cyrus to the conquest of Babylon	. . . . . 20 "
From Olymp. 60, 1, to Olymp. 90, 1	. . . . . 120 "
<hr/>	
Total from Hercules to Herodotus, not including the anarchy in Media	. . . . . 876 "

According to this, out of the 900 years, twenty-four would be left for the duration of this interregnum.

\* I adopt this date, and not Olymp. 84, 1, when Herodotus is said to have publicly read his work. If this account be not altogether groundless, it can only refer to a first recension of the work; for the express mention of incidents occurring in the first years of the Peloponnesian war, and very intelligible allusions to the sentiments with which Athens was regarded by the ungrateful Greeks, have been written much later. Further, the circumstance of two recensions is indicated by the various readings of the commencement; where Aristotle reads, *Ἡροδότου τοῦ Θουρίου*, while all our MSS. read, *Ἡρ. τοῦ Ἀλικαρνασσοῦ*.

† The passage in Herodotus (i. 130), *ἄρξαντες τῆς ἀνα-΄Ασίης ἐπ' ἑταε τρήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν δυὼν δέοντα, παρὲς ἢ ὅσον οἱ Σκύθαι ἤρχον*—has very great difficulties, and has given rise to very various explanations by Conring, Harduin, President Bouhier and Valckenaer, which may be found in "Wesseling's Edition of Herodotus" (ad. 1). For, according to the text of all the

But from Ninus to the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, are 690 years, without determining the duration of the Median anarchy.

If, however, to the 526 years of the Niniads, as given in Berosus, we add 103 Nabonassarian years before Nabopolassar, and eighty-seven \* from the beginning of his reign to the conquest of Babylon, we obtain 716 years for the same period, but including the anarchy, the duration of which

MSS., the sum of the years of the four Median kings amounts to 150; and moreover, two passages, found in all the MSS. of both recensions, likewise agree in giving twenty-eight years as the period of the Scythian rule. Valckenær's explanation appears to me the least successful of all (I hope this expression will not be understood as detracting from my reverence for this excellent man); his opinion, that the twenty-eight years of the Scythians were not included in the forty years of Cyaxares, is evidently contrary to the sense of Herodotus; and although he is right when he says that the Medes under Deioces, certainly did not as yet rule over Upper Asia, yet the arbitrary assumption by which he places the commencement of this rule in the second year of Phraortes, in order to bring out the 100 years, is quite indefensible. Who can persuade himself that Herodotus would express himself in this manner, when he wanted to say that the Medes reigned a hundred years? Where has he ever expressed himself so strangely? I believe, with Conring, who had great penetration, and a sound and independent judgment, that *if the passage be uncorrupted*, the twenty-eight years must be added to the 128; and that we have no right whatever to object, that Deioces did not as yet reign over tributary peoples. Whereabouts should we have to fix the epoch at which this supremacy over Asia began? Is it possible to find the year in which it took place? It may be confidently asserted, that the Median sway did not extend to the Halys before the conquest of Nineveh. Now, whether with Conring, we take 156 years, or the 150 years of the four kings, it comes to the same thing, and the difference of these six years, is only so much added to the anarchy of the Medes. The essential point, and a very essential point is, that the account of Herodotus should be confirmed by its harmony with the Babylonians, and that the accounts at variance with these should be entirely upset as fabulous, and the precision and accuracy of Herodotus vindicated. I, however, regard the passage as corrupt, of which the very numbers 28 and 128, of which the latter cannot be brought into connection with any other event, excite great suspicion;—and I believe that the passage ought be restored and transposed as follows: ἄρξαντες τῆς—ἔσω Ἀσίας ἐπ' ἑτέα πενήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν, παρὲς ἣ ὅσον οἱ Σκύθαι ἤρχον, τριήκοντα δυὸν δέοντα. I have adopted this calculation above; perhaps some day an editor will have courage to adopt the emendation into the text.

\* "Josephus contra Apion," i. p. 1045. d. ed. Aur. All. 1611, the Greek text and an old translation (in which book, the same passage of Berosus has been made use of, respecting the successors of Nebuchadnezzar, which Poly-

would thus have to be reckoned as twenty-six years. And this agrees within two years with the calculation given above, for the 900 years since Hercules. It seems, too, that we ought to assume a short interval, of about the length of a generation, for the interregnum in Media.\*

It is a pity that the years of the third dynasty are specified only in a marginal emendation, which is in itself more than suspicious, and that the reading is not quite certain respecting the fifth; for else, we should be able to ascend to the close of the second mythical period of the Babylonian history with chronological precision. As it is, the number of 1889 years, from the conquest of Babylon by Alexander (in the year 413 after Nabonassar), back to the beginning of the second (Median) dynasty, cannot be received as exact; meanwhile, it approximates within a very small number of years, to that which Callisthenes gives as the age of some ascertained astronomical observations of the Chaldeans, previous to the time of Alexander. It is merely a hypothesis, but the example of the era of Nabonassar gives it probability, that the beginning of this list of observations was the first year of an era, in the 1905th year of which, Babylon was taken by Alexander. If this hypothesis be admissible, this sum will have to be adopted instead of that of 1889 years. Zoroaster might give occasion to such an era, as being the founder of a Median dynasty,† whose kings, moreover, might very well be called tyrants, if they introduced the religion of the Magians.

histor has extracted, which Africanus has copied or abridged from the latter, and which finally Eusebius has so hastily epitomised from Africanus), allows only two years to the government of Evilmerodach; but the Armenian Eusebius, v. 3, assigns twelve to his reign. In the astronomical canon in Syncellus, likewise, we find two years assigned to him, and there is all the more reason to accept this number, as Eusebius takes great pains to bring the Babylonian and his own chronology into harmony with each other, by a calculation which is altogether very forced.

\* Compare Schmitz's "Tr. of Lect. on Anc. Hist." vol. i. p. 35, *note* (in the original, vol. i. p. 43).—*Tr.*

† The age of the Magian Zoroaster is perfectly mythical, and the widely differing statements respecting it, are not of a nature to be cleared up by discussion. Regarded as the founder of the Magian religion, we must refer him

With regard to Oriental countries, we are not only justified in assuming the existence of tabular lists of the reigns, and annals, which were a collection of notes to these, but also, at least with the Chaldeans, in confidently maintaining their credibility, on account of the astronomical calculations which rendered an accurate determination of time necessary. Such observations as those which Callisthenes procured are not conceivable without chronological tables, and lists of the kings and the length of their reigns. Impossible as it was, really to preserve the history of the free nations of the West by tradition, before the commencement of real history, which was of late origin (though even here, dates given as those of the foundation of towns, are credible), with regard to the East, there is absolutely no valid ground to dispute the application of the art of writing, which existed there from very remote ages, to the recording of the simple changes that occur in great despotic Empires. Thus, since we have recovered the testimony of a Babylonian scholar, I hold it as not less historical than the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, or the taking of Rome by the Gauls, that, about 1900 years before Alexander, the Medes conquered Babylon, and that the Arabians possessed a mighty kingdom before the Assyrians. For, that the Arabians should have been subject to the Assyrians for many centuries afterwards, and then again obtained the ascendancy, is a vicissitude by no means rare, especially in Asia. The government of Persia by the Sassanidæ, and the history of Russia after the fall of the Mongolian Empire, are cases in point. Meanwhile, that Empire which was overthrown by the Medes, and for which Berosus has given mythical periods, we may call the Empire of Nimrod. The book of Genesis also recognises in Babel an older Empire, from which Assur proceeds.

to a very remote antiquity, and the most untenable opinion of all is undoubtedly that which places him after Cyrus, because Hystaspes is to be accounted the son of Darius Hystaspis. Since the Magians were a Median race, it is a very suitable way of denoting the Median conquest, to call him the first Median king of Babylon, as Syncellus found it stated in Africanus, and the latter, therefore, had no doubt found it in Polyhistor.

The later Assyrian kings, and some Babylonian monarchs contemporary with them, are mentioned by Eusebius, only because he found Sennacherib and Merodach-baladan named in Polyhistor. Indifferent to the history of these realms on their own account, the excerpt which he has inserted in the fifth Chapter, is, from the very beginning, fragmentary and unintelligible.\* The Armenian translator has given a confused and doubtful rendering of what he did not understand. It seems to result from the passage, that a brother of Sennacherib, placed on the throne either by him or by their father, had been king of Babylon; and that this brother might even be the Hagisa whom Merodach-baladan slew after a reign of thirty days. The embassy of Merodach-baladan to Hezekiah (2 Kings xx. 12; Isa. xxxix. 1), exhibits him as an enemy of the king of Nineveh; and certainly he who had slain Sennacherib's brother would be much more so, than he who had killed a native usurper of the throne of the latter.† Merodach-baladan was assassinated after a reign of only six months by an insurgent of the name of Elibus, in the third year of whose reign, Sennacherib went up against Babylon with the Assyrian army, defeated the Babylonians, took their king captive, carried him away

\* The passage reads thus in the Milanese translation: "Postquam regno defunctus est Senecheribi frater, et post Hagissæ in Babylonios dominationem, qui quidem nondum impleto trigesimo imperii die a Marudacho Baldane interemptus est, Marudachus ipse Baldanes tyrannidem invasit,"—and in the Venetian translation as follows: "Postquam regnasset frater Senecheribi, et deinde postquam Acises in Babylonios dominatus esset, et necdum triginta quidem diebus regnum tenuisset, a Marodach Baladano occisus est."

In the ninth Chapter, is preserved an excerpt from Abydenus, likewise hitherto unknown, respecting the history of Sennacherib and the latest Assyrian kings of Nineveh, which throws light upon some points in the portion taken from Polyhistor, that have been miserably distorted. On the whole, however, this excerpt, like all the other fragments of this author, can sustain no comparison with the portions which Polyhistor has borrowed from Berosus.

† In the passage of the history of Hezekiah which has been doubly preserved in Isaiah and in the 2nd Book of Kings, according to the narrative, Sennacherib's death is placed before the sickness of Hezekiah and the embassy of Merodach. The account of Berosus shows, that no exact chronological arrangement is intended here, but merely the representation of how Sennacherib himself fell, after he had been chastised for his arrogance by the defeat of his army.

to Assyria with his family, and appointed his own son Esar-haddon (Asordanes) king over Babel. On his return to Nineveh, he learnt that the Greeks had made an incursion into Cilicia;\* he contended with them, and gained the victory, but with great loss to his own troops. In commemoration, he caused his own statue to be erected there, and the memorial of his deeds to be engraven on it in Chaldean characters.† At this time, he built Tarsus after the model of Babel,‡ and called the city Tharsin. After Sennacherib had reigned eighteen years over the Assyrians, he was slain by the treachery of his son Ardamuzanes,§ and his son became king in his stead. The name of the latter son is not given in the excerpt, but we know from the Bible, that he was the same Esar-haddon who had been mentioned before as the prince set over Babel. Polyhistor had written still more about Sennacherib, which Eusebius has unfortunately omitted as superfluous; meanwhile, what he has retained is very important, and requires serious reflection.

A Greek expedition to Cilicia, in which Greeks fought against the great king of Nineveh, is an occurrence of which no history, hitherto known to us, gives the slightest hint. The state of Greece at that date (about the 20th Olympiad), forbids the idea of a combined undertaking, such as the Trojan war is represented to have been; yet it were not allowable to reject the statement as an eastern fable; for it cannot be too often repeated, that, for

\* According to Abydenus (c. 9) a Greek fleet had appeared there, which he defeated and scattered.

† According to the same author (c. 9), he erected several brazen statues, and built the temple of the *Athenians*. The Armenian translator has evidently written the last word by mistake instead of *Athene*.

‡ That is, on both shores of the Cydnus, as Babylon was built on both shores of the Euphrates.

§ As we know from the Bible, by his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer. Abydenus (c. 9), also mentions the former as a parricide, under the name of Adrameles, which we cannot fail to recognise, but calls his father, Nergilus the successor of Sennacherib. This Nergilus we must reject on the concurrent testimony of the Old Testament and Berossus. No doubt, Esar-haddon came from Babylon to revenge the death of his father.

long previous to the age we are considering, our knowledge of oriental affairs is based on the authority of contemporary annals. If we should imagine the Assyrians to have confounded some other eastern nation with the Greeks, this could be none but the Lydians; and, that these should have spread so far to the East in the time of Gyges, contradicts all that Herodotus says of the slow extension of their dominion in the neighbourhood of Sardis. But in my opinion, the legends of Greek settlements in Cilicia are not to be altogether rejected, even if we cannot point to any genuine Greek city on that coast; and as, in after times, small bands of well-trained and well-armed Greeks waged war with countless Asiatic hosts, it is perfectly conceivable, that the attempt of Greek colonists to effect a settlement there, may only have been frustrated by bringing a powerful army into the field, and with great loss on the part of the Assyrian king. Further, the image of Sennacherib is without doubt the same which the companions of Alexander saw at Anchiale with an Assyrian inscription on it, and ascribed to Sardanapalus as the founder of Tarsus and Anchiale.\* The testimony of the Chaldean, that Sennacherib was the Assyrian king who founded Tarsus, is certainly to be accepted.†

Eusebius has omitted what Polyhistor relates of Esarhaddon; but in the 9th Chapter, some particulars respecting him have been preserved from Abydenus. He is stated to have been Adrammelech's brother, but not by the same mother; to have subjugated Egypt and the interior of Africa, and to have marched with an army of mercenaries through Anterior-Asia as far as Byzantium. That the story of the conquest of Egypt is false, is proved by the concurrent accounts of Herodotus and the Bible. Perhaps, however, it was he who led Manasseh captive to Babylon; and the expedition to Asia might probably have been occasioned by an irruption

\* On this point see Naeke's "Chœrilus," p. 198. It is cheering to be able to refer the reader to a book like this.

† In the excerpt from Polyhistor, the name is entirely wanting; Abydenus (c. 9) calls him Axerdis.

of the devastating hordes of the Treres or Cimmerians: for it is true that Herodotus places the taking of Sardis under Ardy, the successor of Gyges and contemporary of Esar-haddon, but the Treres have repeatedly made incursions into Anterior-Asia and ravaged the country.\* It is very singular, that Abydenus mentions Pythagoras as having served in this army of mercenaries; and Polyhistor speaks of him as a contemporary of the Assyrian king; still, here also he has probably followed Berosus. This account, which would carry his age back to the 20th Olympiad, and place him 120 years earlier than the opinion adopted by the later Greeks,† would have been very acceptable to those Roman annalists who made him the teacher of Numa, but could not defend themselves from a chronological refutation.

Esar-haddon reigned eight years. He was followed by Samughes, who reigned twenty-one years, and the latter was succeeded by his brother Sardanapalus, who reigned an equal length of time.‡ This prince, on learning that a great host of mixed race was coming up against him from the sea, appointed Nabopolassar to be viceroy over Babylonia. But Nabopolassar sent an embassy to Asdahages, the Mede, to conclude an alliance with him, and to ask his daughter Amuhia in marriage for his son Nabuchodrossor,§ after which he turned his arms against Nineveh and besieged the city; and the king burnt himself and his whole household.

The nation that threatened the Assyrians was probably

\* Strabo, i. p. 61, d.

+ Dionysius, ii. p. 121, a. The difference would be still greater according to others who placed his age after the 60th Olympiad. Sylburg. ad. loc.

‡ The name of the brother and successor of Samughes is not found in the excerpt from Polyhistor, 5, § 2.; but from § 3, it is clear that it was Sardanapalus. In the excerpt from Abydenus (9, § 1), Sardanapalus is the successor of Esar-haddon, and Saracus the last king of Nineveh; this statement can scarcely be ascribed to anything but an error of the translation. The story of the defection of Nabopolassar (in 5) is quite unintelligible and absurd; one would have expected that the editors would have adduced the unambiguous explanation of it from Abydenus, (9).

§ His name is not only constantly thus written in the Armenian translation with a very few exceptions, where the familiar Biblical appellation has fallen accidentally from the pen of the copyist, but also in the fragment of



the Scythians, whose irruption into Asia, Herodotus places under the same Median king who took and destroyed Nineveh. That Nebuchadnezzar was the Babylonian king who, to delight his consort by an image of the Median mountains, laid out gardens over vaults,\* was known from Berosus, as quoted by Josephus; it might long ago have been inferred that she was the Median princess whom Syncellus calls Aroite; the name now made known to us, Amuhia, is more authentic.

Respecting the successors of Nebuchadnezzar, history gains nothing from the Armenian Eusebius, as the extract from Berosus in Josephus "contra Apion" is probably fuller than that which Polybius may have borrowed from him.†

Nabopolassar's revolt from Nineveh occurs in Olymp. 38,

Abydenus in the "Preparatio Evangelica." The roots from which it is formed, appear also in the name Lab-rossoar-chod, the son of Nerigliassar. According to a very remarkable passage given by the Milanese editors from Moses of Chorene, who cites Armenian songs as his authority, Asdahag may probably have been the name of an ancient Median dynasty; but also in the name Cyaxares (unquestionably this Median king is referred to), Kei-axar, —Axar, and Asdahag are identical, like 'Αραξάρης and Arthachsastha.

\* Diodorus (ii. 10) calls this queen the Persian concubine of an Assyrian king.

† It will be permitted me to occupy the space of a note with some remarks which I grant overstep the limits of my subject—the newly published passages—on a history, which in our day is so little the subject of investigation, and which I shall never treat of in a separate work. Since Shalmanezar took Samaria in the 6th year of Hezekiah, but it was in the 14th year of this king that Sennacherib went up against Jerusalem, it is certain that Sennacherib had ascended the throne of his father in the interval. Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, Sennacherib eighteen; the death of both will therefore fall about the same time. If we reckon up the years of the five successors of Hezekiah, and add to them the thirty-seven years of the captivity of Jehoiakin, we find that, according to the numbers given in our Biblical text, which even Josephus had in his hands, that about 137 years elapsed between the death of Hezekiah and the first year of Evilmerodach. But, according to Berosus, only 113 had elapsed from the death of Sennacherib. Such chronological deviations were formerly always decided against the profane author, which is, however, a Jewish masoretic superstition. It is much more probable that there is an error in the number of years assigned to Manasseh; especially on account of the youth of his son Ammon. There is, perhaps, nothing more unexampled in Eastern history, than that a king, who came to the throne at twelve years of age, should attain the age of forty-five, before an heir to the crown is born to him.

consequently the overthrow of the city and the Empire took place at that time. But, from the fall of Sardanapalus to the first Olympiad, Abydenus reckoned 67 years (c. 12), Cephælæon 40, (c. 15): the former, therefore, reckoned 219, and the latter 192 years too much. Both followed Ctesias, or some other Greek unworthy of any regard, in the too small number of the Assyrian kings, as well as in the immense exaggeration of the duration of their monarchy; it is certain that Castor also has fallen into the latter error. Abydenus, who derived his information respecting Nebuchadnezzar from Megasthenes, has probably never had direct recourse to Berosus. This whole class of notices respecting the Assyrian archæology is altogether to be rejected: to attempt to reconcile them with the authentic oriental accounts would be a laborious folly, only productive of errors and endless hypotheses.

Meanwhile I mention the mythical genealogy of Ninus, found in Abydenus (*vide ante*), because it may have been derived indirectly from native sources,—Belus, Babius,

It is universally recognised that the Labynetus of Herodotus is the Nabonnedus of Berosus. But it will occasion perplexity to any one who attempts to arrange for himself the chronology of Herodotus, that Labynetus the Babylonian, is named as bringing about the peace between Alyattes and Cyaxares; for their war took place before the beginning of his reign. Yet Herodotus (i. 188) says, that the last king of Babylon was the heir of the name and the kingdom of his father, and consequently this earlier Labynetus must have been the mediator. Now, however, we are met by a fresh difficulty, for no list of the kings of Babel contains such a king. I conjecture that Herodotus must have meant Nebuchadnezzar (the similarity between the names is not to be mistaken); and it even appears that Amuhia, for whose sake the most gigantic edifices were erected, can be no other than the Nitocris to whom Herodotus ascribes the great works on the Euphrates. This would certainly be an inaccuracy, such as might easily be occasioned by oral relations, in a language foreign to the historian, respecting incidents occurring more than a century and a half before his time. According to the Babylonian accounts which have been preserved to us, Nabonnedus was not the heir of the Empire, nay, perhaps not even of royal descent.

Finally, I must in passing remark further, that the identity of Kadytis and Jerusalem, which used to be rejected on account of the name, seems to be well established. Foreigners bestowed names on the Egyptian cities which have no similarity whatever with the native one; may not the Egyptians have given names equally unlike their true ones to foreign cities?

Anebus, Arbelus, Chaalus, Ninus. In the interpretation of the Chaldean cosmogony and archæology, we must guard against a confusion of Bel, the organiser of the world, with Belus, the mythical founder of the empire of Assur.

The editors ought to have appended the remark to Castor's fragment (c. 13), that the mention of Ogygus among the kings of the Titans determines and corrects a remarkable passage of Thallus, occurring in Theophilus "ad Autolyicum," iii. 19. Both printed editions and MSS. read (respecting the war of Belus and the Titans against the gods): *ἐνθα καὶ ὁ Γύγος ἡττηθεὶς ἔφυγεν εἰς Ταρτησσὸν, τότε μὲν τῆς χώρας ἐκείνης Ἀκτῆς κληθείσης, νῦν δὲ Ἀττικῆς προσαγορευομένης ἥς Ὀγυγος τότε ἥρξεν.* Meursius introduced the alteration *ὁ Γύγης*, and this has been adopted as a safe emendation; it is now clear that *Ὀγυγος* ought to be the reading; the name of that mythical king of Attica. In what follows there is a chasm. Thallus explained the descent of the Titans into Tartarus by the flight of their king to Tartessus; adducing the names Acte and Attica as instances of the changes effected in the names of countries by the lapse of time. He was led to the choice of this example by the mention of Ogygus. According to this, the passage ought to be restored something in the following manner: *ἔφυγεν εἰς Ταρτησσὸν, τότε μὲν τῆς χώρας ἐκείνης Ταρτάρου λεγομένης, ὥσπερ Ἀκτῆς. κ.τ.λ.* Meursius also conjectured the existence of a chasm; it is true, on very different grounds from those I have adduced. . . .

ON THE AGE OF QUINTUS CURTIUS.\*

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THE question, to what age the historian Quintus Curtius belongs, is not one whose announcement can ensure it a ready hearing; for even those to whom its decision is not perfectly indifferent (which is the case with every not utterly un-loving critic of Roman literature), will probably have had enough, and more than enough, of the repeated attempts that have been made to settle it, often without bringing forward any fresh grounds; and will either have decided already, in favour of one of the two or three often refuted and ever-renewed hypotheses started, or be persuaded that nothing can be proved or disproved respecting it. Many, not belonging to those who have adopted one of the hitherto current opinions, and do not wish to be disturbed in it, would fain be excused the examination of a new view, unless express and decisive proofs establishing it can be adduced from ancient MSS. Now such proofs I do not possess, but am limited to the same writings whose interpretation has given rise to such various opinions, and am perfectly aware that the new view I have to bring forward can only be rendered probable, by no means demonstrated; nay, that although it has an intuitive evidence to me, I cannot at all

\* This paper forms part of an Essay written in 1821, entitled, "On two Latin Authors of the Third Century after Christ;" the object of which is to prove that Quintus Curtius and Petronius belonged to that age. The arguments Niebuhr adduces appear conclusive against the hypothesis, that Curtius belonged to the age of Vespasian; but the great philologist, F. Aug. Wolf, and the last critical editor of Curtius, Zumpt, incline to the other opinion combated by Niebuhr,—that he belonged to the Augustan age. The principal reasons

flatter myself that I shall be able to impart this to my hearers. What, however, my arguments cannot accomplish, will probably be effected by a candid consideration of the idea itself, which either has never happened to occur to any one, or if it has suggested itself, has been kept back and not expressed for reasons that I shall explain.\*

I will only remark in passing, that the view, according to which this author belongs to the age of Augustus, is much older than that which places him in the time of Vespasian. A superbly written MS. in the Vatican,—which presents unmistakable signs of belonging to those which Sixtus IV. caused to be written for the Library, on the largest and finest parchment, with marginal notes in gold letters,—remarks of the well-known passage in the tenth book: *Auctor commendat Augustum cuius tempestate floruisse putatur*. I trust no one will see in this an ancient gloss. Most probably the note is from the hand of Pomponius Lætus (according to whose recension, as is well known, the work appeared in one of the earliest editions); certainly from

for this decision seem to be,—first, the Latin style of Curtius, which although thoroughly rhetorical, has all the purity of the golden age, and it seems impossible that so close an imitation of that style should have been made in the age of Septimius Severus. It will be seen how Niebuhr meets this reasoning. If, secondly, we are led to see in this book the work of a rhetor of the Augustan age, it is certainly very striking that Suetonius, in his book, “*De Claris Rhetoribus*,” according to the list of contents prefixed to some MSS. of his Essay, treated of the rhetor Q. Curtius Rufus as the eighth. Now, the first five rhetors of whom he speaks, and of whom alone his account is preserved to us, all belong to the time of the republic, or the beginning of the Empire; and as the whole list was evidently arranged in chronological order, it would seem that this Q. Curtius Rufus must have lived in the time of Augustus.

Apart from this point, however, the Essay possesses general interest and value from the vivid sketch which it gives of the times of Severus. In the translation, the passages to which Niebuhr only gives references are inserted in the text, according to the emendations which he proposed in them.—*Zr.*

\* After this was written, I saw in the *Journal des Débats* that, in “*Lemaire’s Edition of Curtius*,” an entirely new hypothesis is started respecting his age. Is it the same as mine? I am still (1828) unacquainted with this edition. I have been therefore unable to profit by the new readings which it may afford us.—[It appears that Lemaire has brought forward nothing new or important on this point.—*Zr.*]

one of the philologists of that age, who adopted this view on the same grounds which recommended it to later scholars. Nay, who knows but what the surname, Rufus, which seems to show the identity of this historian with that of whom Tacitus and Pliny speak, and Suetonius had written, may rest upon no better authority? It must frequently be wanting; for Modius observes that *some* editions possessed it: the *editio princeps* does not possess it; nor yet two MSS. belonging to the old stock of the Vatican and one of the *Palatina*. That the four remaining MSS. of the old *Vaticana* have it, proves nothing, as all the six are very recent,—certainly written since 1450: one of the *Palatina* is *probably* too old for us positively to ascribe the interpolation to an Italian philologist of the second half of the fifteenth century. Still, before that date, there existed a philology that was only feeling its way, and was bold through ignorance; and in order to make out with some degree of certainty whether the name of Rufus really possesses any authority, it would be needful to examine the comparatively ancient MSS. we have mentioned; for our present MSS. have evidently all been derived from a single torn one; and if the name should be wanting in those which form the links between that and the immense number that have been written since the revival of philology, we must, I think, consider it as an interpolation. I wish to guard against misconception; I do not maintain that the surname which belonged to a Curtius of the first century, ought to be refused to the historian, but I wish to have the inquiry made, whether it has not been attributed to him on insufficient grounds. If so, the hypothesis, which places him in the first century, would lose much in plausibility.

There is incomparably more foundation for a second opinion, which was mooted by men of high rank in our science, at a time when philology had reached its height, and true criticism was practised. It would be perfectly satisfactory, if there were such a parallel between the wars of the Diadochi and the civil wars of the emperors who arose after Nero's chastisement, as the words of Curtius

demand ;—if the supposed allusion to the nocturnal battle of Cremona did not come in so strangely ;—and if, finally, the second of the two passages, on which alone we can base any conjecture as to the age of the author, did not, when subjected to close investigation, appear distinctly to point to a very different age. The principal passage (x. 9) that has been so often discussed is as follows :—

“ But now the evil fates stirred up civil wars among the Macedonians. For the sovereignty does not admit of partnership, and yet is coveted by many. Hence, first the armies strove together, then they dispersed ; and while they burdened the body with many heads, the other members began to give way ; and whereas the Empire might have maintained itself under one man, when it was taken in hand by many, it went to destruction.

“ Thus, rightfully and deservedly have the Roman people acknowledged that they owe their salvation to their prince, who has shone forth as a new star, in that night which we well-nigh thought to be our last. The rising of this man, and not that of the sun, restored light to the darkened world, when the severed members were palpitating without a head. How many torches did he then extinguish ! how many swords did he sheathe ! how heavy a storm did he disperse by the sudden breaking out of his rays ! Hence, the Empire not only shot up, but even put forth flowers. The remote descendants of his lineage—I say it with reverence to the Gods !—will reign beyond the times of this age. May it be for ever ! ” \*

\* The passage in our present editions stands as follows :—“ *Sed jam fatis admovebantur Macedonum genti bella civilia. Nam et insociabile est regnum, et a pluribus expetebatur. Primum ergo collegere vires, deinde dispererunt, dum pluribus corpus, quam capiebat onerassent, cetera membra deficere cœperunt : quodque imperium sub uno stare potuisset, dum a pluribus sustinetur, ruit.*

“ *Proinde iure, meritoque populus Romanus salutem se principi suo debere profitetur ; cui noctis, quam pene supremam habuimus, novum sidus illuxit. Huius hercule, non solis ortus, lucem caliganti reddidit mundo, cum sine suo capite discordia membra trepidarent. Quot ille tum extinxit faces ? quot condidit gladios ? quantam tempestatem subita serenitate*

According to the emendation I have made in the note, it is unnecessary to trouble ourselves further with the imagined allusion to the nocturnal combat. There remains, therefore, the parallel between the wars of the successors of Alexander, and those of certain Roman emperors; and here I ask, where can we find such a parallel if we suppose the latter to be the successors of Nero? I am well aware that those who are determined to draw parallels, can find them or invent them, where they appear extremely forced; further, that a flatterer must not be too particular. Still, his words must have some application.

The wars of the Diadochi were a conflict between the parts,—the members of a whole, which had lost its head. Neither Ptolemy, nor Cassander, nor even Antigonus

discussit? Non ergo revirescit solum, sed etiam floret imperium. Absit modo [verbo] invidia, excipiet huius seculi tempora eiusdem domus, utinam perpetua, certe diuturna posteritas."

I would suggest the following emendations:—

In the first place, we must, with one MS. of the Vatican, and one of Modius, read *collisere vires* instead of *collegere vires*. In the passage immediately following, we find, what must be the case with all books of which all the codices come from a single copy, the text to be insufferable; and since the MSS. that have been hitherto compared have yielded us little help, there is small hope of our seeing it corrected by MSS. that may hereafter be compared. How unendurable is the following: *dum pluribus corpus, quam capiebat onerassent, cetera membra discordia deficere ceperunt*? What is opposed to the *cetera membra*? What sense has the first comma? I believe that it must be altered thus: *dum pluribus corpus capitibus onerassent, cetera membra, &c.* If once *capiebat* was written by mistake—from *capitib.* [The MS. Palat. 914, has *capiat*, with the gloss. *capiebat*—it followed that *quam* was introduced in order to give the passage a construction, if not a sense. The following: *quodque* (here two of the Vaticana, 1865, have *quod quidem*, which deserves consideration) *imperium sub uno stare potuisset, dum a pluribus sustinetur, ruit*,—looks as if there were an error; one expects *ab uno sisti*, or something of that kind; but this may probably be the want of preciseness in the author. Now we come to the famous words: *cui noctis—sidus illuxit*: and here the few and recent MSS. of the Vatican, that I have been able to consult, afford us some help. For, three (1866, 1867, and 5293) read, *qui noctis*: of the three remaining, only 1868 reads, *cui noctis*, and 1865, 4597, *cuius noctis*. But the only true emendation is that of Heinsius, *qui nocti*: which ought to have been adopted with the less scruple, as he himself suggests it, with the fullest conviction of its correctness, since every one knows that *cui* and *qui* have been erroneously substituted for each other, times without number.



flattered himself with the idea of a reunion of the collective body; the acquisition of the greatest possible number of fragments was all that they could hope for, and all at which they aimed. But Vitellius did not choose to share with Otho, nor Vespasian with Vitellius; it was the possession of the whole that was the object of contention. The Empire was not rent asunder; it was not that its *membra discordia* were writhing about without a head; but, that there were several who each wished to be its sole head.

Such a state of things as bore a resemblance to the fate of the Macedonian Empire, and which the words of Curtius may be all the more considered to express, as, though a superficial and careless, he is not a wicked author;—an epoch in which the Roman Empire was torn with dissensions that threatened its total disruption, was not seen before the end of the second century of our era; but recurred from that time forward, under varying circumstances, until Constantine reunited the divided provinces into one realm.

The first age which presents such characteristics, was that after the murder of Pertinax, when four emperors were proclaimed at once;—when, after the destruction of Didius Julianus, the East, favoured by the secret wishes of the Senate, held out for three years under Niger, and Albinus maintained, for five years, his supremacy over the whole extent of what afterwards formed the Prefecture of Gaul;—when a strenuous warfare had to be waged, ere these rivals were vanquished, and the unity of the Empire was restored.

Still more similar to the condition of the Macedonian world after Alexander, was that of the Roman under Gallienus, when the provinces constituted a still larger number of separate and mutually hostile States; and it is perhaps in the system of Diocletian, that we might most aptly find that over-burdening of the body with many heads, of which, according to my emendation, Curtius speaks: as also, it was from this system that, after the death of Diocletian, the most calamitous wars between the different portions of the Empire took their rise, and continued until they were extinguished by the reunion of the Empire under one head.

Of these three epochs, the two latter are excluded by the circumstance, that when Curtius wrote, the Empire of the Parthians still existed (v. 7, 8., vi. 2),\* the fall of which is said to have occurred in the year 226. If it were not for this passage, stiff-necked defenders of the erroneously written *cui*, might perhaps adduce for it the possibility of an allusion to the cross in the air, said to have appeared to Constantine; and this strange interpretation would not really be so insufferable, as that referring *sidus* to the shining of the moon during the nocturnal conflict, which, moreover, has not even novelty in its favour.

And was not the condition of the Empire, when Severus appeared, like a night of destruction? The northern nations, for two centuries and a half limited to self-defence, had already, under Marcus Antoninus,—pressed forward by the conquering Slavonians, strengthened by the withdrawal of warriors belonging to the German tribes who had formerly inhabited the Polish plains, and encouraged by the feebleness of the Roman Empire, now becoming visible to all,—commenced an offensive warfare, which Rome, by straining every nerve, was indeed able to sustain, but not without great exhaustion. For the first time since many centuries, Italy, and most of the provinces had been devastated by a pestilence. The consciousness of a decline, in no wise arrested by the goodness and sanctity of the emperor, must have awakened dark forebodings in the minds of all, at least of those who looked beyond their own immediate sphere. And if the sufferings of the Empire at large had not been so severe but what a mild government might have soon effaced their remembrance, after the pestilence had exhausted itself, and the war was ended,—there now followed the insane tyranny of Commodus, more intolerable than that of the

\* "Alias urbes habuere Macedonum reges, quas nunc habent Parthi."—v. 7.

"Ille jam Ecbatana pervenerat, caput Mediæ. Urbem hanc nunc tenent Parthi: eaque æstiva agentibus sedes est"—v. 8.

"Hinc in Parthienem perventum est, tunc ignobilem gentem, nunc caput omnium, qui post Euphratem, et Tigrim amnes siti, Rubro mari terminantur."—vi. 2.

early Cæsars, for a race, trained by eighty years of continuous and happy repose, only slightly disturbed in the last years of Hadrian, to make higher claims on life than the subjects of Claudius or Nero could dare to cherish. The murder of Pertinax and the elevation of Julianus—more horrible and ignominious events than Galba's death and the low vices of Vitellius,—consummated the terrors of this night. Still, Julianus, as the elect of the prætorians (then still Italians), was the Emperor of Rome; and the proclamation of these anti-emperors by the armies, in whose election a very large part of the provinces took part with great ardour (very unlike the wars of the legions after Nero's death), threatened the Empire, like that of Alexander, with dismemberment. The passionate devotion of many of the oriental cities, particularly of Byzantium, to the cause of Pescennius, has excited astonishment. I believe its explanation is, that the Greek East desired a separation from the Latin West; and the idea of raising Byzantium into a metropolis of the East, may well have suggested itself to others before Constantine. Thus, had not Severus been an extraordinary man, before whom the star of his rival paled, it would certainly have been not merely possible, but very probable, that the Empire might have been divided, at least for a long period: and if it may seem to us, judging from the events of the succeeding century, in which the divided portions continually reunited themselves, more likely that one of the *four* emperors would have brought the whole under his sway,—even though there had been none, like Severus, endowed with the qualities that constitute an irresistible general,—we must remember, that the people of that age did not possess this experience; and therefore, in explaining their writings, we have no need to have recourse to the supposition of a bare-faced flattery which could conjure up a fictitious danger. The brilliant fancy which has rendered such large assistance to one of my dearest friends, in his palingenesia of the biography and characteristics of Curtius,\*

\* Buttmann. See Hirt and Buttmann, "Ueber das Leben des Geschichtschreiber's Curt. Ruf." Berlin, 1820.—*Tr.*

refuses me her aid ; perhaps, because I can only allow that graceful work of hers to pass for a fair vision ; but in the whole passage referred to, I see nothing but what might have been written by a very honourable man, who took reality as we must take it, if we do not choose to dream away our lives ; and was resigned to the fact that Severus was no Trajan, contented that he had saved the Empire.

And must not something like this have been the universal sentiment ? At least, ought it not to have been so ? Every time that we ascend from the Campo Vaccino to the Capitol, our eye is still caught by the inscription on the Arco di Settimio,\* which announces that this monument was erected OB RESTITUTAM REMPUBLICAM ; and we cannot accuse it of untruthfulness. There were certainly several such monuments, and no doubt an abundance of corresponding *Senatus-consulta* and public acclamations. For it is known to all the world that there was a *professio populi Romani, se principi suo salutem debere*. And though the Senate may have made this declaration with little gratitude, nay secretly with a bitter grudge, it was true nevertheless. The intrigues of the senators which provoked the rough general to acts of cruelty, proceeded from ungrateful and wicked hearts ;—effeminate nobles, with no endowments at best beyond some slight pretensions to taste and literature, found their vanity wounded by the little esteem in which they were held by the man whom fate had sent them, and who possessed the qualities which the emergency of the times required. How the Empire flourished under his sceptre,—how rapidly the wounds of past ages were healed, is shown by the well-known passage of Tertullian (*De Anima*, c. 30) :—

“ For now the aborigines remain within their own settlements, and have rapidly increased in civilisation. Indeed, it is most evident, how much the whole world is growing in

\* A fragment of a precisely similar inscription, which certainly also refers to Severus, was copied in the fifteenth century, from a great ruin on the *Forum boarium*, of which there is a drawing by the elder San Gallo ; Mazochi gives a copy of it, but the inscription itself is now lost, as is the case with all the rest that he obtained from these ruins.

refinement and intelligence, as compared with former times. All places are made accessible,—all things are known,—every where there is activity,—smiling farmsteads replace the famous deserts of former times,—corn-fields have vanquished the forests,—cattle have put to flight the wild beasts,—the sandy wastes are sown,—the rocks are levelled,—the swamps are drained,—there are more towns than there used to be cottages. . . . And the greatest testimony to us is the immensity of the population.”\*

One can well understand the deep indignation of Severus, when he discovered the unpardonable traitorous intrigues of the senators with Albinus; and, however repulsive it may sound, to speak hardly of the unfortunate without positive testimony, it was probably very corrupt blood that he shed. I wish he had not done it. I wish, too, that he had followed the example of his best predecessors, and not treated the traditional, though now hollow, forms of the State with contempt; yet we must not forget that his new institutions appear to have answered to the wants of the age, and that ceremonies, where none of those who take part in them retain a spark of the spirit which gave birth to them, become perfectly intolerable to a practical man, as soon as they stand in his way. For the contempt with which Severus treated the forms of the State, those are responsible who allowed them to degenerate into an empty show; and this should not be overlooked by their panegyrists, who appeal to their own feelings; which are however, in general, merely based upon their own imaginations.

I would remind those who take offence at my apology for Severus, that the Christian writers speak of him with gratitude and affection, and that he would not have spared

\* “*Nam et aborigines nunc in suis sedibus permanent, et alibi amplius gentilitatem fœneraverunt. Certe quidem ipse orbis in promptu est cultior de die et instructor pristino. Omnia jam pervia, omnia nota, omnia negotiosa, solitudines famosas retro fundi amœnissimi oblitaverunt, silvas arva domuerunt, feras pecora fugaverunt, arenæ seruntur, saxa franguntur, paludes eliquantur, tantæ jam urbes, quantæ non casæ quondam. . . . Summum testimonium frequentiæ humanæ.*”

the Christians, if he had not thought and governed in accordance with the circumstances of his age. For, excepting that under Diocletian, the persecutions after Domitian, occur under emperors, who more or less fancied themselves in a past age, in which they could not really live; such as Trajan, the Antonines, Decius, Valerian, Julian.

"The Empire not only grew verdant once more, it blossomed;" the Romans measured its vital energy chiefly by military successes; and, under Severus, the armies were everywhere victorious, and the frontiers unmolested; nay they were extended; then indeed a useless acquisition, but when is this ever recognised? So the triumphal arch and the monument in the *Forum boarium* enumerated among his glories: PROPAGATVM IMPERIVM.

The sudden fall of Julianus, and the unhopèd-for salvation of the city from the most dreadful horrors, was like the instantaneous dispersion of a black thunder-cloud by the sun's rays. The torch of the incendiary was lighted,—the sword of the murderer unsheathed, and the impending danger seemed inevitable; but the approach of Severus struck terror into the criminals, and paralysed their arm. The Romans did not come off thus unscathed in the war between Vitellius and Vespasian.

In the passage under consideration, the "*huius hercule, non solis ortus*," still presents some difficulty. If I were inclined to trifle, I should remind the reader of Severus's belief in astrology, and the extraordinary conjunction under which he was born. But in the whole sentence, I see nothing more than a rhetorical figure; and, as the passage is altogether so very corrupt, I should be tempted to read,—*ceu solis ortus*. How often *eu* is turned into *on* is quite clear, as well in the cursive as in its parent character, which I have named the transition-character, or *semiquadrata*; and in such a torn MS. as that of the tenth book, there will have been many letters that had become quite illegible.

But if, after all, people will not be satisfied to let the *sidus* pass for a metaphor, a literal and perfectly unforced

interpretation may be found for it. When Didius Julianus presented the offering for his accession, there appeared three parhelia, which the soldiers and the populace publicly interpreted as signifying the three emperors proclaimed by the armies.\* To give a literal application of this phenomenon,—when Curtius wrote, the true sun of Severus had extinguished the meteors of his rivals, (for he alone could be referred to here).

Severus, like Vespasian, would certainly have regarded it as a very awkward mode of expressing loyalty, if an author had accompanied the wish that his successors might reign to the remotest ages, with a fear that *envy* might poison this happiness; .viz., by successful revolts, and dynastic revolutions! Curtius, however, is not speaking of the reign of the successors of the emperor, but of a long series of descendants, reaching, if it might be, to the end of the world; and this succession could not be cut short by envy; unless, indeed, the victor exterminated the imperial family; and no Roman would have suffered such an unhappy idea to escape him, even in those times. And envy is of all things least formidable to a sovereign; envy is in its very essence powerless. But envy is not the thing meant. We may safely assume that Curtius wrote according to the usage of the best ages, when *invidia* was not yet synonymous with *livor*, when it was only the general negation of *benevolentia*,—disfavour, not hostility; and, when used in a narrower sense, an unfavourable prepossession: according to which, there was a righteous and worthy, as much as an unrighteous and unworthy, *invidia*, and envy was only the latter, or scarcely even that; for Cicero, as it appears, invented the word

\* Xiphilin, as given by Dio. lxxiii. 14. Τρεῖς δὲ τότε ἄνδρες—ἀντελάβοντο τῶν πραγμάτων, ὃ, τε Ξεβήρος, καὶ ὁ Νίγρος, καὶ ὁ Ἀλβίνος—καὶ τοίτους ἔρα οἱ ἀστέρες οἱ τρεῖς, οἱ ἐξαίφνης φανέντες καὶ τὸν ἥλιον περισχόντες, ὅτε τὰ εἰσιτήρια πρὸ τοῦ Βουλευτηρίου ἔθενεν ὁ Ἰουλιανὸς, παρόντων ἡμῶν, ὑπηνίττοντο. οὕτω γὰρ ἐκφανέστατοι ἦσαν ὥστε καὶ τοὺς στρατιώτας συνεχῶς τε αὐτοὺς ὁρᾶν, καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἀντεπιδεικνύειν, καὶ προσέτι καὶ διασθροεῖν ὅτι δευρὸν αὐτῶ συμβήσεται. ἡμεῖς γὰρ, εἰ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα καὶ πηρόμεθα ταῦθ' οὕτω γενέσθαι, καὶ ἠλπίζομεν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ γε τοῦ παρόντος δέους οὐδ' ἀναβλέπειν εἰς αὐτοὺς, εἰ μὴ παρορῶντές πως, ἐτολμῶμεν. καὶ τωοῦτο μὲν τοῦτο οἶδα γινόμενον.

*invidentia* to express it. But even thus interpreted, the expression is little less insufferable. Curtius, however, never thought of saying anything of the kind. One need not read him very attentively to perceive how constantly he has Livy before his eyes and imitates him. In this case we have another instance of it; and *absit invidia*, in his vaticination of the endless duration of the imperial house, is nothing but the *absit invidia verbo* in Livy (ix. 19), where he boasts that the Romans infinitely surpassed all other nations in valour and warlike skill; in fact, is a formula of precaution in using expressions which might irritate Nemesis.\*

Perhaps the passage we are considering may not be unconnected with coins of Severus bearing his image and that of Caracalla, or those of Caracalla and Geta, with the inscription "*Æternitas imperii*." (Eckhel vii. p. 179.)

Moreover, while the thought of this passage is very suitable to the age of Severus, its expression contains an incontestable allusion to Florus, who had boasted of the rule of Trajan; "*movet lacertos, et præter spem omnium senectus imperii quasi reddita iuventute revirescit*." Curtius calls his own age yet more fortunate: "*Non revirescit solum, sed etiam floret imperium*." Whether he did so with justice or not, is not the question; it is clear that an optimist, not to say a courtier, might, with a show of reason, dwell upon the calamities that befel the Empire under Trajan; and we cannot doubt that Florus was then, as in later times, universally read; so that the allusion would occur to every reader.

\* In the passage of Livy to which I have referred, the word *verbo* is wanting in some MSS.; and this would justify the text of Curtius, if these MSS. were those which could alone have weight among those of the first ten books that have been compared; but precisely these have the word, and therefore it is more likely that the inconvenient *modo* in Curtius ought to be altered into *verbo*. Altogether, every accidental testing of any passage in this author, shows that his text has been indescribably ill edited; since, with the exception of Modius, Acidalius and Heinsius, no philologist of high rank has, up to this time (1821), occupied himself seriously enough with its criticism. From MSS. we can only hope, that they may give us the text as it was before the Italians of the fifteenth century whitewashed it with their glosses; but this alone would be a great gain.



The second passage which has likewise attracted the attention of all who have written on the age of Curtius,—is that in which he refers to the fate of Tyre (iv. 4), and which concludes thus: “Thus, having undergone many calamities, and having revived again after destruction, now at length, when all things have been renewed by a long peace, it enjoys prosperity under the guardianship of the Roman clemency.”\*

The idea must present itself to every one that Curtius had probably a special inducement to trace the further progress of the fortunes of Tyre, since, in speaking of the founding of Alexandria, he makes no similar digression concerning this city, whose rapid growth and lasting greatness almost bound the historian of Alexander, for the sake of his hero's fame, to dwell on the success of his great idea. The imitation of Livy's account of Saguntum is indeed palpable; still, this is not a sufficient explanation. As I was once reflecting on this subject, while idly turning over the leaves of the not very instructive book, it occurred to me to consider what epochs under the Roman sway had been memorable for Tyre, and then I naturally remembered the passage in Ulpian (Pandects. *lex i. pr. d. de censibus*), according to which, the privileges of a colony were conferred on this city by Severus, as a reward for its devotion to his cause in his war against Niger; whereas, up to that time, she had been a free allied city. I was the sooner struck by this, as I had already referred the principal passage to Severus.

With regard to the circumstances under which this mark of distinction was conferred, it is enough to refer to Eckhel's masterly work (iii. p. 387. 388). The city received as a colony the name of *Colonia Septimia Tyrus*, and retained the title of the Metropolis of Phenice. And it cannot be doubted that it will also have been

\* “*Multis ergo casibus defuncta, et post excidium renata; nunc tamen longa pace cuncta refovente, sub tutela Romanæ mansuetudinis acquiescit.*” Hirt's emendation,—*tandem* instead of *tamen*,—ought to be adopted without hesitation.

enriched by a grant of land and territory at the cost of Berytus.

That Tyre should have been thus distinguished by the emperor's favour, explains, I think, what would otherwise appear strange. Other inducements to the author, which may be imagined as possible, only belong to the unlimited realm of the conceivable ;—such as that Curtius might have been descended from inhabitants of Tyre, like Ulpian, whom we must by no means regard as a native of that city. He says, “unde mihi origo est;” he could not write thus if he had been born there. Besides, no man writes an acquired language as Ulpian writes Latin, nor expounds a foreign jurisprudence as he did the Roman. He was, in fact, when Severus raised the city into a colony, in any case, already a man of mature age ; and, up to that time, the Tyrians had not enjoyed the Roman citizenship.

There must have been some reason for the writer's selection of precisely this subject. Now, it is certainly true, that in the days of Vespasian, in the first century of our era, the history of Alexander would have been a happy choice for a rhetorician who found himself incapable of writing contemporary history (and that Curtius was unable to do this, is proved by his utter ignorance of military affairs), as there did not as yet exist any good work on the subject, even in Greek. Still, the Roman literature was the nearest object of regard ; and, whenever Curtius may have written, no Latin author had anticipated him in his subject ; under Severus, there were peculiar circumstances, which might lead to such a choice on the part of a man who wished to please at Court by his work—reasons which had no existence under Vespasian.

Severus loved literature, which Vespasian despised, nay, in truth hated ; under him, a book might make the fortune of the author. His Parthian wars turned his own and the public attention to the east, and made the history of the overthrow of the first Persian Empire for the moment doubly interesting. Hopeless as was the Persian war of Constantius, it yet gave occasion for the dedication of the

*Itinerarium Alexandri* to that Emperor; and even Arrian, a writer whose capacity was in itself a sufficient call to the work, might have found in Trajan's war a reason for supplying the deficiency in his native literature. Another reason, altogether peculiar to this reign, was, very probably, the fantastic admiration of Caracalla, who was early appointed to the joint regency, for the Macedonian hero; the absurd extent to which he carried this sentiment is well known; and as he gave himself up to it in the first years of his sole government, and cherished it to the last, it is probable that he had nourished the passion from his early youth.

Since all these circumstances present themselves unsought to any man, who has some knowledge of Roman history,—and an impartial person will not deny that they give great weight to the hypothesis I have thrown out,—it may raise a prejudice against this hypothesis, that they have never been brought forward by any of the distinguished philologists who have discussed this question. I should not think it unfair if it were objected to me that, just because my conjecture has such an air of probability, there must have been decisive reasons why it was not even mentioned by such men as Rutgersius, Vossius, and Lipsius, of whom we may take it for granted, that they placed before themselves and tested every possible supposition: I, too, believe, that at least one or other of them must have thought of this; but it seems possible to explain why they should have put it aside, and declared themselves in favour of opinions which seem to me so much less tenable. Probably they were too much intent on discovering an historical night of terror; and perhaps they were also restrained by another consideration,—namely, the prejudice that an elegant work, in so good a style, could not have been written after the time of Trajan, with which we are accustomed to close the age of classically written Latin works. A man who writes much more purely and fluently than, for instance, Gellius, Apuleius, and Tertullian, could not, they think, have been younger than the two former, and a contemporary of the last.

Without entering into a minute examination of the language of Curtius, I think I may say, that no one acquainted with the subject can fail to perceive how perfectly foreign his style is to that of the writers of the so-called silver age, into the midst of which he is transposed by the adherents of the opinion that Vespasian was his hero. This age has such a peculiar character in its style, of effort after wit, effect, and *esprit*, that it presents the same contrast to the Augustan age, as the age of Louis XV. to that of his great-grandfather. Amidst such a literature, no one writes with the old simplicity, especially if there are many writers, because every one wishes to be remarked. At such a period, too, every one who is not stupid possesses some brilliancy and wit; and the man is least of all likely to write simply and modestly, in treating of a subject, which his own arbitrary choice, and not the circumstances of the time, have led him to select.

The striving after effect, which was originally introduced by the Greek rhetors, was carried to ever increasing excess by the Roman writers, and some writings of Apuleius, and still more of Tertullian, show what monstrosity had been reached, even in the second century, in the hope of stimulating dull palates. Rare words, the most unnatural modes of expression, bombast and pedantry were brought into requisition; writing became really so laborious, that the paucity of writers is no wonder; and more than one fine intellect,—as for instance, almost at the close of the series of Roman authors, Sidonius Apollinaris,\*—excites the reader's regret, as much as he sometimes torments him. The

\* Degenerate times disguise the innate excellence of noble minds so much, that in their productions they appear rather ridiculous and foolish. But it is one of the duties of the historian to do his best to regain for them the recognition they merit, though not to confer for their sakes undeserved praise on the bad forms to which they were forced to accommodate themselves, like the external forms of Dante and Calderon. Now, as the above-mentioned Gaul belongs in a high degree to the number of men thus contemned, and in such cases authority is of much avail, I will remind my readers, that J. M. Gessner also ranked him very high, and called him a great man.

people wrote as an artist would paint who tried to copy nature, not as she is seen by healthy eyes, but as she appears in mirrors distorted by optical instruments; and as their own mirror is often badly polished, they not unfrequently fail in all their attempts to give distinct outlines to the image in their thoughts.

Still, this style did not suit everybody, and among those who ought, and wished to write, some sought to produce the effect, where spices had failed, by means of iced water. In the youth of Tacitus, Calvus had exaggerated admirers; and from the time of Hadrian, there appears a literary sect that swears by hoary antiquity, (which had not wanted its admirers under Augustus,) and looks down with no less contempt on the epoch of matured cultivation in the Cæsarean age, than on the writers of the subsequent period, who had been seduced into wrong paths by the effort after wit and cleverness. Fronto is remarkable as a type of this sect. He was in reality stupid; and ought rather to have chosen some mechanical trade than the profession of an orator and author: to him no ideas presented themselves in unsought-for abundance, as to the classic authors of Cæsar's days; nor did he know how to render his few thoughts interesting by his mode of treatment and the light he threw upon them, like the writers of the subsequent periods; and yet, to win notice he would have had to surpass Seneca and Pliny (as Sidonius for example does try to surpass them), if there were no style but theirs. Hence, he made a virtue of necessity, and conceived a perfectly sincere hatred for the faults of the so-called silver age; nay, it is not to be denied that, since he was determined to write, nothing could be more sensible than to clothe the poverty of his thoughts in select old words, without ever making an attempt to go beyond himself. Simplicity and poverty have a semblance of relationship, like *naïveté* and folly; and thus Fronto's pleasure in Cato and Ennius was probably quite honest. Cicero and the writers of the Augustan age could not but be distasteful to him; and of this distaste he made a merit, by treating them as corrupters of the ancient language,

false to the national mind, and guilty of the degeneracy of taste. This false and shallow preference for the antique and indigenous, is very perceptible in many allusions in Gellius.

But however perverted this tendency might be, and however impossible that it should be more than a passing fashion, it may yet have had the wholesome effect of checking the false mannerism of affected wit, and allaying the fever of composition. Since it had become permissible to call a laboured and false style a perverted taste, it was possible for men of higher intellect to turn once more to the classic authors. But to learn from them—to form a style upon their model, without imitating them, seems to have been beyond the powers of that age, except in the case of a very few individuals. Probably, too, the extraordinarily rapid degeneracy of the spoken language may have rendered it very difficult to do so; just as an American, who hears none but Creoles speaking around him, might find it impossible to write well, without confining himself punctiliously to certain examples. Thus Minucius Felix and Lactantius imitated Cicero, even to borrowing from him whole passages; thus Curtius imitates Livy, even to copying him, and, in truth, most skilfully and successfully. In purity of language, and the avoidance of unclassical expressions, he is very superior to his somewhat older contemporary, Minucius Felix. Far as he stands below Arrian in other respects, he follows his model with no less skill. The Greeks, too, had begun to imitate antiquity, as is shown most strikingly by Arrian and Pausanias; and their example may have operated in this case, as it ever did, upon the Romans.

The style and language of Curtius are so evidently those of the Augustan age, that they might seduce us more than all other arguments to place him in or near that time; but they prove nothing more than the style and language of Arrian. For no one will deny a Roman the capacity for such ingenuity, nor be deceived by fancying it impossible to imitate Livy after the lapse of two hundred years.

But the greatest *virtuoso* in imitation will scarcely be able to avoid betraying himself here and there by a phrase or word, belonging to his own time, and foreign to that into which he is labouring to transport himself.

Has Curtius succeeded in entirely escaping this danger? or does something, even in his language, betray his age? This question grammarians alone can answer with full authority and certainty—before whose deeper insight and more competent judgment, I should express my own opinion with hesitation, if one of their number were ever to esteem the investigation of this question worth his trouble,—an affair which I have by no means undertaken. Yet, in looking through the work for the present occasion, two passages presented themselves unsought for, which I will point out to such legitimate judges: probably, many other similar instances might be found.

The following (occurring in vi. 5), “*Quorum urbs erat obsessa a defectione,*” instead of “*a populis qui defecerant,*” is a phrase of which I should be inclined to maintain that it incontestably betrays an age of degeneracy in the language. This use of the abstract form, to designate the collective number of those to whom the term applies, may be confidently said to be foreign to the good age; and it first appears with the decay of the language, then becomes frequent (particularly in the ecclesiastical writers), and has partially found its way into the derived modern idioms.

In the well-known passage on Tyre, the phrase, “*sub tutelâ Romanæ mansuetudinis acquiescit,*” seems to me also to betray a late period. *Mansuetudo tua*, like *pietas tua*, and others of the same kind, is usual; and instances may be adduced, from the fourth century onwards, in addresses to the emperor: and it seems to me clear that even if *sub mansuetudine imperii populi Romani* might have been written in the good time, the author here meant to express nothing more, by his artificial turn of expression,

than would have been simply expressed, at an earlier period, by *sub majestate populi Romani*. But, indeed, what right have we to wonder at the correctness and purity (such blemishes excepted) of the language in which Curtius writes? How well Ulpian writes, if we pass over some similar things of little moment! Yet he was no rhetorician, but wrote as a statesman, careless whether his language was classical or not.

Now, if it be conceded that Curtius belongs to the period to which we would assign him, there is still less reason to wonder that he is nowhere mentioned. But I will not make use of this to strengthen my argument, since it ought not, in any case, to excite much surprise. As regards the silence of the "*Itinerarium Alexandri*,"\* it may be easily explained wherever we place him;—the bad author did not wish to admit that his own work was superfluous. It would not be easy to indicate a passage in any work preserved to us which would have given occasion to quotations from him, and to the grammarians, his imitated style offered no novelties.

I know of only one place in which he might have been mentioned: by Lampridius (or Spartianus?), in his "*Scriptores Histor. August. Alex. Sev.*" c. 30. For the life of Alexander, which was among the favourite books of the young emperor, his namesake, is alluded to by the biographer in such a manner that it was assuredly one of the few *Latin* books that he read, and must have been our Curtius. But the biographer omits the name of the author, because no other Latin history of Alexander existed, and his purpose was to show how the young prince was impressed by this history, not to do honour to the writer.

The silence of Quintilian would not be decisive on this point, as Curtius is by no means original; and those who take most pleasure in his graceful and easy narration would scarcely venture to praise him for that thoughtfulness and

\* *Itinerarium Alexandri ad Constantium Aug.*



power which the critic requires, before all else, from the historian : Quintilian will, therefore, have passed him over with others. Would he, who is silent as to Fabius Rusticus (" recentium eloquentissimus," says Tacitus), have spoken of Curtius, even had the latter belonged to those of whom he might speak in accordance with his ingenious system ?

SKETCH OF THE  
GROWTH AND DECAY OF ANCIENT ROME,  
AND OF THE  
RESTORATION OF THE MODERN CITY.\*

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At a period which cannot be chronologically determined, a small city lay on the Palatine, and a second on the Quirinal Mount; the first was a Latin, the second a Sabine colony; when both were united into one city, the Tarpeian Hill formed their common Acropolis. A third city, also belonging to the Latins, was situated on Mount Cælius; all the low grounds, between and around the two former, were still a morass; the Carinæ were a suburb protected by a mud wall. We cannot suppose any fortifications to have existed where the hill-sides were at all precipitous. Afterwards, a new suburb of greater importance arose on the naturally-fortified position offered by the Aventine Hill.

When the city, which had grown up here, became, for a time, the centre of a confederation of the Latins, Sabines, and Etruscans, the low grounds were drained by the *cloacæ*, and the fortified wall extending from the Colline Gate to the Esquiline Gate, with other walls which were carried through the valleys and connected the hills surrounding the Palatine, united the whole interior into a great city; yet so that some portions within this boundary were not reckoned as belonging politically or religiously to the city; indeed, with regard to religion, a still larger part of the inhabitants were excluded than with regard to politics.

\* This Essay was written in 1823, for the "Description of the City of Rome" by Platner and Bunsen.

Within this circumference (for wall is a very inapplicable term), lay the separate hills, each forming a citadel fortified for itself. Virgil's words: "*septemque una sibi muro circumdedit arces*," are highly appropriate; in the primitive times, none of the hills were accessible to wheel-carriages from the low grounds within the city, on more than one declivity; the Aventine was not made accessible at all till a very late period, and the same is probably true of others,—for instance, of Mount Cælius. Hence, the repeated mention in the histories of the earliest age of the republic, that conspirators sought to make themselves masters of τὰ ἐρουνὰ τῆς πόλεως,—*munita urbis loca*, or even of τὰς ἄκρας. Some hills had at the same time their own *arces*: this was the case with the Tarpeian and Aventine Mounts.

This wide enclosure was, as may be imagined, very unequally inhabited. The Esquilinus, Viminalis, and the district where the Quirinal sinks into flat ground, which was included chiefly for the sake of fortification,—tradition not even making any mention of colonies in these parts,—will have been for the most part forest and meadow land: in the calamitous wars which oppressed Rome so grievously in the third century A. U. C., the fugitive country-people, with their cattle, could be taken into the city itself.

But when the republic arose from its fall, the interior of the city must have gradually filled more and more with buildings, until its conquest by the Gauls, who laid it in ashes. The effects of this calamity were visible up to the time of Nero, in the irregularity of the streets; and even after its restoration, no extension can have been thought of for a long time. In the fifth century, the dwelling-houses were still roofed with shingles, and in all parts of the city larger or smaller copses might be met with. The first extension, of which we find an account, is the inclusion of the tract on the bank of the river under the Aventine and Capitoline Hills, which was already thickly settled in the time of the war with Hannibal; this quarter is called *extra portam Flumentanam*. Much building was carried on in this district afterwards, so far as the extant books of Livy reach.

We are unable to follow the progress of extension during the seventh century; but we see that at the time of the war with Marius, the walls already lay within the real city, at least in very many parts: there is reason for supposing that at that date a suburb already existed in Trastevere. At the beginning of the eighth century, another *in Æmilianis* is mentioned—probably the gardens of Æmilius Paulus and the younger Scipio were situated there,—and it seems likely that this included all the town that had arisen between the Quirinal and the Circus Flaminius which had already been built before the war with Hannibal. A mile from the Porta Capena, near the temple of Mars, a hamlet had sprung up, which was still separate from the city, but was afterwards joined to it as the latter extended.

Within the city itself, there were no handsome streets like those of more modern capitals, except the Carinæ and Suburra, perhaps too the Via Sacra. A peculiar obstacle stood in the way of a regular extension of the city, along the roads which ran from the principal gates into the open country. Along the high-roads, such as the Via Appia, Via Latina, and others, the land on both sides had been occupied by sepulchres before the possibility of such an increase of the city had been thought of; in the triangular spaces between the roads, gardens had been laid out. The division into regions by Augustus shows the then extent of the city pretty clearly. Trastevere is one of the regions; beyond the Porta Capena, the district *ad Martis* is included within the city, and also the Piscina Publica, between this part and the Aventine; up the river, the city probably reached nearly to the end of the Strada Giulia, and thence, with a tolerably wide bend round the Circus Flaminius as its centre, nearly to the Quirinal. Agrippa's large edifices were evidently erected on open spaces. With little exception, the ancient circumference of Rome was then no longer to be recognised. Under the following emperors, the whole quarter on the east side of the city, particularly between the Porta Collina and the Porta Cælimontana, appears to have been that which contained the most brilliant palaces, and was the chosen

quarter of the fashionable world, which had quitted the Carinæ and Suburra. These palaces, however, were not placed in streets, but in gardens, which, as already observed, occupied the spaces between the high-roads, on the various *campi* named after the nearest hills; such were the Horti Mæcenatis, Pallantiani, and Epaphroditi, the Domus Lateranorum and Merulana, &c.

Nero's conflagration, by causing the streets to be widened, and thus rendering an immense space unavailable for private dwellings, while the population was constantly on the increase, drove the inhabitants of the city still farther out into the country; and thus a circle, inclosing all the buildings really belonging to it under Vespasian, might very easily have the circumference assigned to it by Pliny, though we cannot draw a plan from his account. So much however is certain, that, even under Trajan, the Campus Martius, at least as far as Ponte Sisto, was still open ground free from buildings. The same causes of extension continued to operate under this emperor and his successors. The Thermæ of the emperor Alexander Severus, and the Circus Agonalis were erected on open fields; the decree of this emperor, respecting the imposition of the municipal excise, proves that, in his days, the boundaries of the city on the Flaminian road lay far beyond the Porta del Popolo.

The first great blow which the population of Rome received, was the pestilence under Gallienus, which carried off an enormous number of its inhabitants. This deficiency was the less easily filled up, since, as we are informed by the remarkable testimony of a contemporary writer,\* one of those periods had already commenced, which exhibit a prevalent sterility of marriages, just as others show an unusual frequency of births;—and since, moreover, the import of slaves and their number suddenly decreased to an incredible extent, in consequence of the change in the fortunes of war and the impoverishment of the country. This, too, any one may see by comparing the inscriptions before and after that period.

\* St. Cyprian in his Treatise against Demetrianus.

Aurelian's wall, erected soon after this period, proves little with respect to the real circumference of the city, for it must have been limited to such an extent as it was possible to defend, and would make use of the natural advantages of locality, as was the case on Monte Pincio; it could not include far-stretching suburbs, and, on the other hand, it surrounded the Campus Martius. From the reign of Diocletian, the absence of the Court deprived the capital of advantages which were more essential to it than ever, although the enormously rich private families remained, and the distributions of corn were continued. That, in the time of Constantine, districts, which had hitherto been occupied by private houses, had begun to be deserted, seems to be indicated by the choice of the situation where he built his *Thermæ*; yet under Constantius, Rome still seems to have borne an aspect of surpassing splendour to the eye of a foreigner; and the more intolerable the oppression became in the country regions of Italy, the more would families take refuge within its walls.

It is not probable that the few basilicæ really erected by Constantine, were founded at the expense of more ancient edifices; we cannot, however, suppose the same of the rest which were built during the fourth century. From the reign of Theodosius, and when the Roman aristocracy had at last resolved to adopt the religion of its master, the very frequent erection of churches of every size was an immediate cause of destruction. The Court and private persons were, once for all, not wealthy enough to send for marble columns from over the sea; yet they wished to build, could rarely turn the temples into churches, and regarded the building materials contained in the former as so much forsaken property. The number of columns, however, employed in these edifices is incredibly great; some idea of it may be formed from the fact, that a portico extended from St. Peter's to the Bridge, nay, another even from St. Paul's to the Gate. Now, when the columns were taken away, the whole edifice sooner or later fell in. The rest of the building materials belonging to the edifices

doomed to destruction, were seized upon by any one who happened to want them.

The misery, the spoliation, the devastation, which the city underwent in the fifth century are universally known; nor can it be questioned, that many buildings must have been destroyed in consequence of such events as the civil war between Anthemius and Ricimer. That the loss of Africa deprived many of the richest families of their property,—that the public distributions of corn were constantly diminished,—that at several periods famine prevailed, are also well-known circumstances. From all these causes, the population must have decreased with fearful rapidity, and the consequence of this decrease would be a decay of the city from the circumference towards the centre, such as we see in the sinking capitals of Asia. Under, or immediately after Theodoric, we find Rome not only reduced within the limit of the wall as it had been restored and extended by Honorius, without a trace of suburbs except one that had sprung up by St. Peter's, but even within the outside wall there is already much left uninhabited; the garrison of Belisarius sows the waste places; and although we have no means of estimating the population, everything indicates a most extraordinary diminution. The most remarkable edifices were, however, still standing, and the majority of them uninjured, but they certainly were poorly kept up, so that time would inevitably lay them in ruins. In the Gothic war, the population was consumed by the pestilence and the two famines, particularly that suffered by the city during the siege of Totila; and the rapid reconstruction of the walls, which the conquerors had razed on regaining the city, was executed at the cost of the ancient edifices.

This period is followed by two centuries of uninterrupted decline, of whose earlier portion the letters and homilies of Pope Gregory the Great give a very graphic picture. The pestilence, which constantly reappeared at intervals of a few years, carried off a population worn out by misery, with such fearful rapidity, that the extinction of the human race was very seriously anticipated. The monastic life

which was adopted by many thousands, promoted the depopulation; the Lombards wasted the country with fire up to the very walls; unexampled storms and floods added to the general misery and fear. We may assert without fear of error, that in those days all men's minds were pusillanimous, gloomy, and spiritless. The inundations are a proof that the old bulwarks against the river had been overpowered; Fea has collected the accounts of several of the most terrible of these floods, from the "*Liber Pontificalis*:" each was followed by the fall of decayed buildings, which had not been immediately swept away by the rush of the waters. The extreme poverty, with which barbarism kept pace, necessarily gave a value to all metals which were not protected as the property of the State. It is false that all the aqueducts except the Aqua Virgo were already broken down; the Appia can only have ceased to flow from becoming gradually stopped up; the Claudia was evidently still in existence under Pope Hadrian in the eighth century; and baths must still have been in general use, because Pope Gregory rebukes those superstitious persons who held it sinful to make use of them on Sundays. The imperial palace was not merely standing, but had its Cura-Palati, one of whom, Plato,\* about the middle of the seventh century, undertook to restore part of it, to which belongs most probably a large column, certainly of this or a still later date, which may be seen in the Farnese garden, near the old Vicus Tuscus. The Exarch, too, lived in this palace when he came to Rome, and so did Calliopas, the persecutor of Pope Martin the First. The spoiliations of the Emperor Constans, and the grants to individuals, which partly saved, partly conduced to the destruction of the ancient edifices, are well known. Churches and convents were built unceasingly, and always from the materials offered by the ancient structures; the Popes also extended their palace near the Lateran by irregular additions. The columns of Phocas, themselves taken from some building, and the gate of San Sebastiano, are the only extant profane

\* See the poem of his son, the eloquent Pope John VII., in Marini. "*Papiri diplomatici*," commentary, p. 368.



monuments of this age; nor has even a mention of any other been preserved.

Among the strokes by which Nature, as it seemed, sought to lay Rome in ruins, we must not forget the lightning. A thunderbolt melted the brass entablature of the portico of the Forum, soon after the city had been plundered by Alaric; and from the unmistakeable marks which they bear of having suffered from fire, I believe that the fall of perhaps all the obelisks may be ascribed to this cause. It is well known, too, that astonishment at the continued existence, amidst the gradual decay of the city, gave rise to the proverb, that Rome could not be destroyed by the hand of man, but only by floods, earthquakes and thunderbolts. Another proverb, however, excepted the Colosseum, which, it seemed, could only perish with the world itself.

To the end of this period belongs the "*Itinerarium Romæ*" of the monks of Einsiedeln, from which much information, concerning the condition of Rome at that epoch, may be drawn. Thus, for instance, the *façade* of the *moles Hadriani* must have been then still untouched, because the whole of its inscriptions are copied, and the same must have been the case with the *façades* of many temples and other buildings whose dedicatory inscriptions are collected in this work. The Portico, between the Palatine and the Circus Maximus, must have been standing uninjured, because it served as a road for the processions, and the numerous ancient monuments which are mentioned can only have been in a state of decay.

Meanwhile the suburb, which had come into existence near St. Peter's, had already extended itself, and Germans of the most various races had located there in separate quarters.

The Romans lived throughout this period on the alms which the Popes distributed from the revenues of the enormous estates of the Church, as they had formerly lived on the imperial gratuities of corn; though a large portion of these revenues was spent on the magnificent decoration of the churches, which contrasted strangely with the horrible calamities of the times. The final cessation of the pestilence,

towards the middle of the seventh century, together with the long-continued peace with the Lombards, may have brought with it some revival of prosperity, but no distinct traces of such recovery appear before the middle of the eighth century. The nearly a hundred years, which elapsed between this date and the landing of the Arabs in Sicily and their somewhat later expedition against Rome, are evidently a period of greater splendour and prosperity than the city had enjoyed since the days of Honorius. The revenues from the imperial donations enriched the Popes, and, until the Arabs deprived them of the *patrimonium* in Sicily and Sardinia, they were now able to spend large sums, while the taxes, which were formerly extorted for Constantinople, were either remitted, or expended on the necessities of the city. Thus we again meet with rich and noble families: there is a considerable amount of building; but as basilicæ were still erected, every new church was the ruin of one, or of several ancient edifices; for the various columns assembled in one church are evidently collected from perfectly different structures. This kind of architecture is carried on with more or less activity in the same manner till the thirteenth century; and it is needless to speak of it again, if the reader will remember that, from henceforward, every period of tolerable prosperity hastened the destruction of ancient Rome. So, no doubt at an early date, the lime for new buildings was procured by burning the marble and travertine of the old; nay, broken statues of marble were built into the walls, as at the hospital of the Lateran. Still, Charlemagne could gaze with astonishment on what he regarded the golden Rome.\*

The walls which Pope Leo IV. erected round the Borgo,

\* The following Elegy on Rome, written at the end of the eighth century, displays the feelings which the contemplation excited in one who understood her ancient greatness. It is given by Muratori from an old Modenese MS. in his "Antich. Ital.," tom. ii. diss. 24, p. 47.

Nobilibus quondam fueras constructa patronis  
 Subdita nunc servis, heu male, Roma ruis!  
 Deseruere tui tanto te tempore reges,  
 Cessit et ad Græcos nomen honosque tuus.

and his towers along the Tiber, were, however, not merely beneficial to the city, but from their mode of construction with tufa, involved no destruction except as far as their lime was concerned. That parts of the city, which are now forsaken, were then still inhabited, is clear from the Chronicle of the monk of St. Andreas, at least as regards the district between Santa Susanna and the Porta Salara.

With the fall of the papal dignity, the impoverishment of the Church, and the contemporaneous rise of powerful magnates in the city, Rome sank once more into progressive decay from the end of the ninth century. The times of the Saxon and Frankish emperors brought repeated desolating misfortunes, such as had not been experienced since Totila; it was repeatedly taken by storm; and that after an obstinate resistance, to overcome which conflagration was employed. At the same time, the noble families were acquiring consequence, and internal feuds were already commencing.

In te nobilium rectorum nemo remansit,  
 Ingenuique tui rura Pelasga colunt :  
 Vulgus ab extremis distractum partibus orbis,  
 Servorum servi, nunc tibi sunt domini.  
 Constantinopolis florens nova Roma vocatur,  
 Mœnibus et muris Roma vetusta cadis.  
 Mancipibus subjecta jacens macularis iniquis,  
 Inolita quæ fueras nobilitate nitens.  
 Hæc cantans prisco prædixit carmine vates :  
 Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.  
 Nam nisi te Petri meritum Paulique foveret,  
 Tempore jam longo Roma misella fores.

In Bede's works we find the same poem appended to the astronomical poems of a certain Manfred. The translation is made from the latter version (adding below the lines there omitted). The first two distichs are the same as in Muratori; but the remainder runs thus :—

Constantinopolis florens nova Roma vocatur,  
 Moribus et muris Roma vetusta cadis.  
 Transit et imperium mansitque superbia tecum,  
 Cultus avaritiæ (nefas) te nimium superat.  
 Vulgus ab extremis distractum partibus orbis  
 Servorum servi, nunc tibi sunt domini.  
 In te nobilium rectorum nemo remansit,  
 Ingenuique tui, rura Pelasga colunt.

These alone would have destroyed the edifices; but the cathedral of Pisa has, also, undoubtedly received its finest materials from Rome; the really noble columns of gigantic size, decorated with wreaths and foliage, in particular, can scarcely have been obtained elsewhere; and I think it is not a hazardous conjecture, that the emperor may have presented them, out of his imperial palace, to a city so faithfully devoted to him. The ancient inscription uses the expression, "brought over the sea," but whether this is applied merely to these pillars, or to the whole forest of columns, is hardly conceivable in a colony of moderate greatness, as Pisa was in the Roman times, especially as there are not even any from Carrara among them. The so-called *Casa di Pilato* may be assigned to the tenth century, as the names mentioned in the inscription are still Roman, and without any kind of family appellation. To somewhere about the same period belongs a very large and desolate ruin lying in Trastevere, almost opposite to the *Casa di Pilato*; it is

Truncasti vivos crudeli funere sanctos,  
 Vendere nunc horum mortua membra doles (l. doces)  
 Nam nisi te meritum Petri Paulique foveret,  
 Tempore jam longo Roma misella fores.

Built in ancient days by the noble labour of patrons,  
 Verging to ruin now, Rome, thou art subject to slaves!  
 Kings that reign'd so long in thy walls have left them for ever,  
 Left them, and gone to the Greeks; gone with thy glory and grace.  
 Constantinople is cherish'd; New Rome is the name that they call her;  
 Thou, old Rome, must decay—going are thy customs and walls,  
 All thy empire is gone, yet thy pride remains in thy weakness;  
 All thy riches are gone; fondness of money remains.  
 Races of men ignoble, swept here from earth's uttermost borders,  
 These are now thy lords—slaves that are subject to slaves.  
 None of thy noble rulers remains to gladden thy villas,  
 All thy freemen are far, tilling Pelasgian fields.  
 Once thou hast slain the prophets, cut off the heads of the holy,  
 Now thou teachest thy sons profit to make of their bones.  
 For of a truth, if the merits of Paul and of Peter should fail thee,  
 Great Rome art thou no more; no, but a poor little Rome.

Now given over in shame to the venal hands of the taxer,  
 Once exalted in place, graced by the love of the great.  
 And so, alas! is fulfilled that ancient saw of the poet:  
 ROME shall be transposed: Rome is no MORE as it was.

even possible, that among the very old houses of this quarter one might be found here and there dating from this age. The tower through which the Marrana flows into the Tiber, was erected towards the close of the eleventh century, and the city walls were then restored throughout. That the Forum was then not as yet filled up in rubbish is, I think, sufficiently proved by the discovery during the excavations of 1817 of a silver coin of one of the Henrys, lying immediately on its ancient pavement.

At the beginning of the twelfth century, Bishop Hildebert of Mans wrote an elegy on the ruin of the city, composed in part by putting together fragments of older date, after the manner of the architecture of those days; it is true his object is to exalt, in the corresponding poem, the happy compensation which Rome has received in becoming priestly, but some characteristic traits render the elegy touching and heart-stirring to posterity.\* The civil wars were then already

\* We subjoin some of the finest verses of this elegy, which it is interesting to compare with that of the eighth century, before quoted.

Par tibi, Roma, nihil cum sis prope tota ruina :  
 Quam magni fueris integra, fracta doces.  
 Longa tuos fastus stas destruxit, et arces  
 Caesaris, et superum templa palude jacent.  
 Ille labor, labor ille ruit, quo dirus Araxes  
 Et stantem tremuit et cecidisse dolet. . . . .  
 Expendere durus thesauros, fata favorem,  
 Artificis studium, totus et orbis opes.  
 Urbs cecidit, de qua si quicquam dicere dignum  
 Moliar, hoc potero dicere : Roma fuit !  
 Non tamen annorum series, non flamma nec ensis  
 Ad plenum potuit hoc abolere decus :  
 Tantum restat adhuc, tantum ruit, ut neque pars stans  
 Æquari possit, diruta nec refici. . . . .  
 Cura hominum potuit tantam componere Romam,  
 Quantam non potuit solvere cura Deum.  
 Hic superum formas superi mirantur et ipsi,  
 Et cupiunt fictis vultibus esse pares.  
 Non potuit natura deos hoc ore creare,  
 Quæ miranda deum signa creavit homo.  
 Vultus adest his numinibus, potiusque coluntur  
 Artificum studio, quam deitate sua.  
 Urbs felix, si vel dominis urbs illa careret,  
 Vel dominis esset turpe carere fide.

very frequent and destructive; the powerful families took possession of defensible buildings, or obtained them as grants. That the imperial palace was still partially standing and even habitable, seems clear from the ceremonial, according to which the emperor and empress dined there on their coronation, in, as it was pretended, the halls of Augustus and Livia. The great buildings which the nobility converted into fortresses, served also as dwellings; it is an acknowledged fact, that the remains of cross walls in the Colosseum date from this time, and were the work of the Frangipani: the dwelling-houses in the so-called *Thermæ* of Titus may equally belong to this age. Towers were however erected on new foundations, such as the *Torre de' Conti*, the tower, now called *Delle Milizie*, and the two standing near it; on the *Aventine*, which was as yet by no means deserted, was erected the stronghold of the *Savelli*, near *Santa Sabina*. A luxuriant vegetation springs up on the ruins of Roman buildings on account of their puzzolani mortar;

Rome! even now unequall'd, ev'n now, when beheld as a ruin:

Here in thy fragments we see how thou wast great as a whole.

Time has humbled thy pomps, and levell'd the walls of thy Cæsars,

Yea, and the fanes of thy gods cumber the slimy morass.

Fallen are the works of thy power, the works on which distant *Araxes*

Trembled to gaze as they stood, mourns to reflect in their fall. . . .

Weigh we now thy treasures, thy leaders, thy fame and thy fortunes,

All the bright glories of art, all the rich wealth of the world;

Weigh we this, and then say—but what can we say that is worthy?

What can we say but this—Rome was, and this now is Rome!

But not even long ages, nor flame, nor the swords of thy foemen,

Quite have availed to destroy, quite to extinguish thy grace.

So much is left, so much still falling, that man is unable

That to match which remains, that to restore which is gone. . . .

Thus the labours of ages have raised a Rome which may not be

(Made by the hands of men), marr'd by the pow'r of the gods.

Here the forms of celestials, celestials marvel to gaze at,

Yea, they would willingly be such as they see themselves here.

Nature herself is poor to produce a presence so godlike,

Such a presence as here sprang from thy formative hand;

Such a presence as draws devotion, which follows and worships

Rather the art so divine, than the divinity's self.

Happy thou as a city, if either now were thy masters,

Or if thy masters could know that it is base to deceive.

and hence, even in the middle of the twelfth century, the heaps of rubbish in the Forum appear as *horti*, and the Forum of Augustus is called in an ancient document, composed in this or the following century, *hortus mirabilis*.

The first half of the thirteenth century is the date of the composition, which very often appears both in manuscript and in ancient specimens of printing, mostly under the title "*Mirabilia Urbis*," from which, as well as from the "*Ordo Romanus*," we may discern in general the existence of very many ancient structures and monuments, occasionally under the most curious names. Towards the middle of this century, an intentional devastation took place at last, such as had never occurred before. This is the celebrated work of destruction carried on by command of the senator, Brancalione, who, in order to render the mutinous nobility defenceless, caused a hundred and fifty buildings, no doubt almost without exception ancient, to be demolished. May he not also have thrown down a part of the Colosseum; and may not the breaches made in it, extending from the top to the bottom, have been the result of his purpose to raze the whole? He may probably have intended to tear out all the iron binders, in order to facilitate the demolition of the whole structure afterwards.

If we might trust some accounts, it would seem that the city was still populous under the Swabian emperors, and sent numerous armies into the field, but these statements have a very apocryphal appearance. According to another account, whose historical value I have also not succeeded in ascertaining, the city numbered only 35,000 souls, in the second half of the thirteenth century. It is known with more certainty, how nearly the city approached utter depopulation during the residence of the Popes in Avignon; how even almost all the churches stood deserted, with fallen roofs and sinking walls; how irregularly scattered huts formed the inhabited part of the city, to which, at that period, not one of the hills really belonged. It is still possible to recognise, from the names of the regular

streets of later origin, how the various trades and handicrafts lived in this lower region, from the Via Montanara towards the bridge of St. Angelo. On the hills, churches and convents lay scattered as in the country, and the greater part of the enclosure within the outer walls was inhabited by actual peasants, who lived in the vineyards planted on the rubbish. How far Cancellieri's assertion, that before the return of the Court from Avignon the number of souls had sunk to 17,000, is founded on truth, I am unable to judge.

With this return of a Court now immeasurably rich, a new life certainly began for the city, which displayed its full energy after the termination of the schism; but as the Romans were at that time in the utmost barbarism, the restoration of what had gone to decay became a new source of destruction. The most unmistakeable traces have been found of a lime-kiln planted in the midst of the Temple of Concord, in which marble was burnt; Poggius saw the walls of the Basilica of the Cæsars, which was long held to be the Temple of Concord, burnt down and converted into lime.\* Under Sixtus IV., the half of the portico of the Temple of Hercules, then still standing and situated near Bocca della Verità, was demolished; but, unhappily, a similar list might be continued through the succeeding centuries. The real revival, or rather the rise of the new city, began under that

\* To this refer the following verses by Æneas Silvius, afterwards Pope Pius II.

Oblectat me, Roma, tuas spectare ruinas,  
 Ex cujus lapsu gloria prisca patet.  
 Sed tuus hic populus muris defossa vetustis  
 Calcis in obsequium marmora dura coquit.  
 Impia ter centum si sic gens egerit annos,  
 Nullum hinc indicium nobilitatis erit.

Rome, I love to ponder and sadly to gaze on thy ruins,  
 In thy ruins to day see I thy glories of old.  
 But thy people, alas! digs forth from thy ruins thy marbles,  
 Digs thy sculptures forth, scorches thy sculptures to lime.  
 If three centuries more continues this impious labour,  
 Of thy grandeur and pomp then not a trace will remain.



Pope. He caused the streets to be widened, so that they now for the first time deserved the name of streets; he restored the great bridge, which has received his name, and was then called Ponte Rotto,—the bridge now called by the latter name bore then the name Santa Maria. The Via Flaminia, from the Via Lata onwards, was then quite open, with tombs and several half-ruined triumphal arches beside it; northwards from Sant' Agostino, round the tomb of Augustus, it was all fields. Under the successors of Sixtus, Dalmatians and Albanese of Catholic religion settled here, having been driven from their homes by the Turks; and the whole district received from them the name La Schiavonia. Between this period and the end of the century, were erected the Venetian Palace, the first worthy of the name in the reviving city, and many churches both of the inhabited and the waste parts. Under Julius II., the work of creation received a powerful impulse, and the whole city assumed a new appearance. We will not here speak of the erection of the new St. Peter's or of the origin of the palace of the Vatican; it is at least sufficiently clear that he laid out the Via Giulia, and united Trastevere and the Borgo on the other side of the river by the Lungara, which certainly, at that date, was by no means a regularly-built street; as now, with the exception of the Farnesina, most likely few of its buildings are remnants of that time. The Corso, likewise, was as yet only lined with insignificant buildings, generally enclosed in gardens. Since this street and the Suburra were absolutely the only streets still retaining in any degree the direction of ancient streets,\* and these two were carried along the top of rubbish, the city, as yet, was completely destitute of pavement; about 1550, however, very many considerable palaces and houses had already sprung up.

During the next hundred years, excavations were carried on everywhere with the greatest vigour, and, during this

\* I have been subsequently informed, that the Via della Pedacchia also represents the course of an ancient street.

period, probably the fine works of art brought to light were a hundredfold more numerous than in all the time which has passed since then. At that time, these still remained in the city, of whose wealth in the inestimable antiquities of every kind, dispersed through hundreds of houses, what is still left is but the shadow. Unhappily, Raphael was the only man who conceived the idea of bringing to light the relics of ancient Rome from their dust, by means of regular excavations, and this idea was never in any way carried into effect. By excavations made for the sake of plunder, columns and facings of the finest marbles and *mischi* were discovered, and all were devoted to the decoration of the new churches and palaces. This system of plunder, which left the most brilliant ruins nothing but crumbling walls of brick, was extended to the travertine and the magnificent bricks of the old fortifications. The tombs beyond the gates, and some buildings in the same locality, had suffered little, in an earlier period, on account of their distance from the causes of destruction; now, they began to be stripped or entirely demolished. On the Via Appia, for instance, we have the greatest difficulty in recognising, from Boissard's description, the disfigured relics of the present day. At the beginning of the century, the city wall had been freed from the rubbish which had formerly not even left a road open from one gate to another: but the Forum, though it had been filled with rubbish at an earlier period (for the earth taken from new foundations was emptied there as the nearest waste place), became more and more deeply covered. In the time of Gamucci, the beginning of the inscription over the column of Phocas was still to be seen, though no one had the curiosity to read it.

Under Leo X., it is said, the population had already risen to 80,000, and it continued to increase up to the French Revolution. The enormous wealth, not only of the Popes themselves, but of the cardinals and prelates, during the greatest part of this period, attracted this ever-growing crowd, notwithstanding the murderous disproportion between the births and deaths. Nepotism, which showered incredible

sums on the new family, even during short pontificates, occasioned the erection of princely palaces.

Pius IV. was the first who made a road over the Quirinal to the gate, which he built beside and instead of the old Porta Nomentana: not long afterwards, his successors conceived the idea of having a summer residence in this cooler spot; but before it was carried into execution, Sixtus V. made the street from Trinità dei Monti to Santa Maria Maggiore, and from thence to the Lateran. This street, with the neighbouring private houses, formed a region separate from the inhabited city, and was called *il Borgo del Laterano*. The completion of the papal residence, and the commencement of the neighbouring government-buildings, made a new centre on the Monte Cavallo, around which a large population, and a corresponding number of buildings gathered. After 1600, the neighbourhood of the Fora of Augustus and Nerva, which had become a swamp, was drained and occupied with streets. But few new streets have been made since the middle of the seventeenth century, only one from the Suburra up towards the hills; in the eighteenth century none. The old streets, which were wide from the first, afforded sufficient space; yet between 1700 and 1795 the population rose from somewhat above 130,000 to nearly 170,000, not including the Jews. During both centuries, building was carried on with indefatigable activity, and ever deteriorating taste,—more poverty-stricken as the treasures of the ancient city became exhausted. The Revolution, with its indescribable calamities to Rome,—the violent expulsion of thousands, during the short-lived republic, as well as during the union with France,—the year of famine and pestilence in 1802—had brought down the population in the year 1813, according to the official lists, to 115,000, *including* the Jews; and even this estimate is thought to be too high. It has now risen to 136,000, according to the old mode of reckoning, within the city and its precincts, which include the site of Veii, and will scarcely increase much further; deserted houses are nowhere rare, except in the quarters chosen by foreigners, and are very frequent in Trastevere and the

Borgo. No one has missed those which were pulled down to lay open a part of the Forum Trajanum; no one would have missed the still larger number which would have been removed if the French rule had lasted longer, in order to connect the Piazza of St. Peter's with the Piazza Scossacavalli, or even had it been extended up to the Castle.

PREFACE TO  
NIEBUHR'S SECOND EDITION OF HIS TRANSLATION  
OF DEMOSTHENES' FIRST PHILIPPIC.\*

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..... Demosthenes has said many things which another age, likewise beset with perils, ought to lay to heart for its own instruction and warning. Unless it do so, the wide-spread philological studies of this century have been carried on in vain, and the multiplication of the classics, in hundreds of thousands of copies, will only serve as a damning proof against our age, that it has no creative power except for externals.

His fellow-citizens consoled themselves for the power which they saw continually gathering to itself fresh forces, by holding up to public scorn the deficiencies and failures in the aspirations and efforts of their own State :—themselves totally unprepared for action or self-sacrifice,—until, after successive and growing calamities had proved the truth of his words, a younger generation had grown up under his training. And in all the other States of Greece, no voice echoed his earnest entreaties to unite for the salvation of their best blessings—nay, for the preservation of life, personal liberty, and property; and to forget all beside. Some saw in Philip the friend of liberty, because in Thessaly he took the government out of the hands of the oligarchy, and introduced a democracy so lax that it might content our

\* These are Niebuhr's last words. Written on the 17th. of Dec. 1830, they were not printed until after his death.

regenerators of Switzerland at the present day, for a few months : when he rent the country into four States,—seized upon Magnesia,—placed a garrison in Pegasæ,—the people found excuses for him ; it was needful in order to support liberty against the oligarchs. In Peloponnesus too, he rendered aid to democratic revolutions ; and if he set up governors, such as were wont to be called tyrants, they were *of the right colour*,—it was a temporary, an unavoidable measure. Others extolled him as an instrument of justice, when he declared for the Messenians against Sparta, and refused to allow the Spartans to retain any of their conquests ; and many were the zealots and the hypocrites who opened the gate of their fatherland to him who blasphemed all deities, as the avenger of the sanctuary of Delphi.

Everywhere envy rejoiced that Athens had suffered shame and calamity : if it came to the worst, they hoped to be devoured last by the Cyclops ; and surely they would be able to escape him ; surely he would be appeased : besides, he might die before it went so far.

At last, many awoke with terror from their dream. History weeps over those, too, who fell beside the Athenians at Chæronea, but their guilt is not blotted out ; for through them Greece fell, the Germany of antiquity.

END OF VOL. III.



















